

L. gr. ⁴⁰
89 ^h₄₀

de

b. Q.

L. gr. 89^h 4°

Pickering

BIBLIOTHECA
REUVENSIANA.

Ex bibliotheca
Steph. Quatremeri.

<36630662220016

S

<36630662220016

Bayer. Staatsbibliothek

E

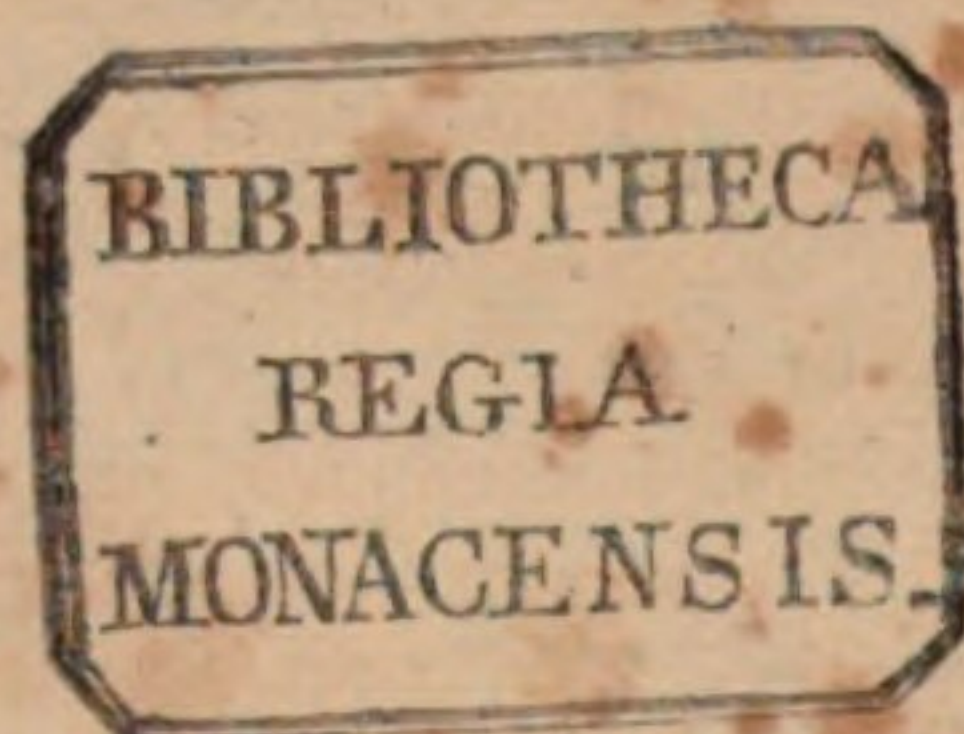
AN
ESSAY
ON
THE PRONUNCIATION
OF THE
GREEK LANGUAGE,

AS PUBLISHED IN THE MEMOIRS OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
ARTS AND SCIENCES.

==
BY JOHN PICKERING.
==

=
CAMBRIDGE:
PRINTED BY HILLIARD AND METCALF.

1818.



On the Pronunciation of the Greek Language.

By JOHN PICKERING, A. A. S.

THE arrival of a Greek ship, called *The Jerusalem*, at Boston in the year 1814, afforded me an opportunity, which I had long desired, of making some inquiries respecting the language of the *Modern Greeks*, and of comparing it in some particulars with the unrivalled idiom of their ancestors;—a people, whose authors are still our models in writing, as their architects and sculptors are in the arts. In the course of my inquiries, many things presented themselves to notice, which highly excited my own curiosity, as well as that of some of my friends, and gave a new interest to the recollections arising from the study of the *ancient Greek* authors in our youth; and, as opportunities of conversing with Modern Greeks are extremely rare in our country, (this being the only instance of the arrival of a Greek ship in this part of America,) I have thought it would not be uninteresting to the members of the Academy to be possessed of such of the observations I made, as seemed to be most worthy of attention.

I ought here to state, that my information respecting the Modern Greek language and my instruction in the pronunciation of it, are chiefly derived from the supercargo of the ship, Mr. *Nicholas Ciclitira* (or, as he writes it in his native dialect, Νικόλαος τζικλι-

τήρας*) who has lately visited this country again, and now resides in Boston. He is a native of *Navarinos* (anciently *Pylus*) on the western coast of the Peloponnesus, and is an intelligent, well-informed man; but he has told me with much frankness and modesty, and at the same time with regret, that he had not enjoyed the advantages of a learned education; and that the education he had received (which was the common one of his country) had been of the less service to him, as he had been engaged in mercantile business all his life, and had thus been compelled to withdraw his attention from literary pursuits. He had, however, in his youth studied *Homer* and some other ancient authors, as is common in Greece at this day; but, from the circumstances above mentioned, he had in a great measure lost the knowledge which he had acquired of ancient Greek at school, and retained but little more of it than had been preserved by the daily use of his native language, the *Modern Greek*. In addition to the information thus derived, I had also frequent conversations with the master of the ship, Captain *Lazarus Nicholas Katára*, (λάζαρος νικόλας κατάρα, as he used to write it himself, who likewise spoke *Italian*,) and I frequently heard him read, particularly in the *Greek Testament*, which he appeared, in general, to comprehend without difficulty. He was a native of *Hydra*, (the ancient *Aristera*,) an island on the southeasterly side of the Peloponnesus, and celebrated for its seamen and nautical enterprize. He

* In writing his name in *Roman* letters, *Ciclitira*, he gives the letters the powers which they have in *Italian* (*Cheekleteerah*) which he speaks fluently, as is common throughout the *Levant*; but in *English* we might write it, in strict conformity with the Greek orthography, *Tzikliteera*, only pronouncing the *i* as in our word *magazine*. Every reader will recollect a similar combination of *Tz* in the name of John *Tzetzes*.

had been a seaman from the age of nine years; and, as he informed me, had never been at school since that early age; the effects of which deficiency in education were apparent in his reading and writing. This circumstance however (as has been justly observed in a similar case by an intelligent writer on this subject*) obviously gave his testimony the greater weight in relation to the *common language* of his country; because, as he could not be aware of the controversies among the learned in Europe on the subject of the *ancient* and *modern Greek*, it was not in his power to frame his answers to my questions in such a manner as to suit any particular hypothesis of European scholars.

I may here remark, that I have felt the greater desire to communicate to the Academy the information thus obtained respecting the *pronunciation* of the *Modern Greeks*, because it led to a strong conviction in my own mind very different from the opinion I once entertained of it. Adopting the opinion, which was first propagated with success by *Erasmus*, (who, however, did not adhere to it himself in practice,) I had long supposed their present pronunciation to be grossly corrupt, and wholly different from that of their ancestors. But the attention I have given to the subject, in consequence of my frequent conversations with the two Greeks I have mentioned, and an examination of the controversy, which took place in the age of *Erasmus*, (which will be more particularly noticed hereafter,) have occasioned a change in my opinion. It now appears to me highly probable, nay almost certain, that the Greeks of the present day pronounce very nearly as their ancestors did, as early as the commencement of the Christian era,

* Observations upon the Greek Accents, by Arthur Brown, Esq. published in the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. vii. p. 359.

or at least just after that period. As this opinion, however, is contrary to that which has prevailed among our countrymen, and probably among most members of the society I am now addressing, I have thought it proper to exhibit, as concisely as possible, some of the principal arguments upon which it is founded. In doing this, I shall make no pretensions to new or original remarks; but shall only attempt to select such facts and observations of the writers on this subject, as appear to be the most important in a general view of the question; and such as may, I hope, incite some persons of more leisure and ability than myself, to prosecute this interesting inquiry.

Here, perhaps, the old and often recurring question may be asked, (not however by scholars,) *of what use would it be, even if practicable, to ascertain the true pronunciation of the Greek Language?* With every lover of learning it would be a sufficient answer to say, that the fact itself, like any other thus ascertained, would gratify a liberal curiosity, by settling a long contested point in the literature of one of the most interesting nations of antiquity. It may be added, however, that it would afford us the substantial advantage of putting within our power the means of tracing the etymologies of modern languages through the *oral* as well as *written* part of this admirable tongue, the influence of which has been felt among so many nations. It would also give a new interest to the study of Greek; for every man, who has attempted to acquire a language, feels with how much greater satisfaction he pursues the study of it, when he knows how to *pronounce* it, than when he is obliged, like the unfortunate deaf and dumb, to study merely its *written characters*. In truth, with all nations, except the singular people of China, the whole power of

a language is believed to be in the *oral* part of it, or the pronunciation;* and a scholar hardly feels satisfied, that he knows a language, till he has learned its pronunciation. But to all speculations on this point it is an answer, the force of which every scholar will feel, that could we but bring before our eyes the orator of Greece, and hear with our own ears the accents of that tongue, which swayed the destinies of his country, we should not stop to inquire, of what use it would be to know the pronunciation of the language which fell from it.

It may, perhaps, be thought that we cannot at this day satisfactorily ascertain the ancient pronunciation of Greek. It must undoubtedly be admitted, that we cannot arrive at all the delicate distinctions of accent, (as it is commonly called,) which few but *natives* ever acquire, even with the aid of a living instructor;—distinctions, which change from one age to another in all nations. Such alterations have probably taken place in the successive periods of the *Greek* language. But, that the *general pronunciation*

* “The Chinese (says Mr. Duponceau) consider the mode of conveying ideas to the mind through the eye, by means of written signs, as far superior to spoken words which communicate perceptions through the ear. ‘The people of *Fan*, say they, (meaning the Europeans,) prefer sounds, and what they obtain enters by the ear; the Chinese prefer beautiful characters, and what they obtain enters by the eye.’ ‘It is, indeed, says Remusat, impossible to express in any language, the energy of those picturesque characters, which exhibit to the eye, instead of barren and arbitrary sounds, the objects themselves, figured and represented by their most characteristic traits, so that it would require several phrases to express the signification of a single word.’” See the learned and philosophical Memoir on English Phonology, published in the *Transactions of the Philosophical Society at Philadelphia*, by Mr. Duponceau; who cites, for the first of these quotations, *Morrison’s Chinese Dict. Introd.* p. vii.; and, for the other, Remusat, p. 56.

of this language has undergone any essential change in the course of eighteen centuries, I cannot believe to be the fact. On the contrary, I think it can be very satisfactorily shown, that little alteration has taken place even in that length of time. By adopting, therefore, the pronunciation of the present day, we can, as mathematicians express it, approximate very nearly to that of ancient times. How far preferable this would be to our barbarous custom of pronouncing Greek just as we do our own language, I need not stop to remark. This custom, indeed, our English brethren, as well as ourselves, justify by the example of the European nations in general, who have adopted a similar practice. But this justification rests upon a palpable fallacy; for, defensible as the rule may be in the case of other nations, it is not applicable to those who speak the *English* language. The pronunciation of the *English* letters, particularly of the vowels, is essentially different from that of the other European languages; the principal sounds of which are undoubtedly much the same with those of the Latin and Greek. The same rule, therefore, which may be a very good one for the nations of the *continent of Europe*, will be a very fallacious one for Englishmen.

In the case of another ancient language, I mean the Hebrew, we are very well satisfied with making such an approximation; (for that we do no more than approximate in this instance will not be contested,) and, by means of the Masoretic points, we have among the learned of all nations a uniform pronunciation of Hebrew, which may be traced back to a very ancient date. This pronunciation, it is true, was for a time discountenanced by Masclaf and his followers, who attempted to introduce what was thought to be an improved method; and the innovation was fa-

avourably received in our mother country, as well as by ourselves, and at one period was even taught at our University. But our scholars are now again following the general practice of the learned in Europe; and they would feel as much ashamed to be ignorant of the pronunciation, as they would of the letters themselves.

Now our means of ascertaining the pronunciation of *Greek*, are not less ample than in the case of the Hebrew language; nay, they are probably more so; for *Hebrew* is admitted by all to be a *dead* language; but *Greek*, though commonly called such, can hardly with strict propriety be ranked in that class; because, though the *form* of it is somewhat changed, or, as we are accustomed to say, corrupted, yet the *body and substance* of it, (I mean among the people of education,) and therefore probably the *pronunciation* too, have been transmitted from one age to another down to our own times, by the same unmixed race of people, who have always spoken it, and as the *same language*. Certain it is, that the pronunciation has undergone no perceptible change since the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, (nearly four hundred years ago,) from which period it may be traced back to the eleventh century with a very high degree of certainty; and many facts conspire to show, that no material change had taken place for the seven or eight preceding centuries.

At the period of the taking of Constantinople, the learned and accomplished Greeks, who are well known by the honourable appellation of *the Restorers of Learning*, and who were compelled to seek refuge in *Europe* from the oppression of their Turkish masters, taught their native language with their *native pronunciation*; and their European disciples at that time would no soon-

er have called in question the correctness of it, than they would have done that of a Frenchman, or a German, who should have instructed them in either of their languages. We find accordingly, that Erasmus himself, but a short time before he ventured to condemn the pronunciation of the day, when desirous of obtaining a professor of Greek for the University of Louvain, wrote to *John Lascaris* at Constantinople for a *native Greek* to fill that office. In his letter to Lascaris, after mentioning the establishment of the College, which was founded at Louvain by the munificence of *Busleyden*, and informing him, that the *Hebrew* and *Latin* professorships were already filled, he adds—"Many persons here are seeking for the *Greek* professorship. But my opinion has always been, that we should send for a *native Greek*, from whom the students might at once acquire the *genuine pronunciation* of the Greek Language; and this opinion is acceded to by all, who have the management of this business. They have accordingly directed me, on their behalf, to send for such a man as I should think qualified for the office. Relying, therefore, on your obliging disposition towards me, and on your regard for the cause of learning, I beg of you, if you know of any person, who in your opinion will do honour to us both, that you would direct him to hasten to this place immediately."*

* It will not be uninteresting to the friends of literature, to see the whole of this letter; which records, at the same time, the fact I have mentioned, and an illustrious example of liberality in the cause of learning; and, as the collection of *Erasmus' Letters* is not common in this country, I shall here insert it at large:

"*Joanni Lascari Constantinopolitano Erasmus Roterodamus S. D. Vir omnibus ornamentis clarissime, Hieronymus Buslidius, homo doctus ac potens, et hujus regni decus incomparabile, in itinere Hispanico moriens, legavit multa milia ducatorum ad institutionem novi Collegii apud Lovanium Academiam hac*

The truth is, that *Greek* was not then considered as a *dead* language; nor had it, among the people of education, departed much from the standard of the first periods of the Christian era.* Indeed, if we may take literally the glowing description given by *Philelphus*, a learned Italian, who was naturalized at Constantinople about thirty years before the Turkish conquest, the Greek language at that period was not only *spoken* but *written* in all its

ætate cum primis florentem, in quo publicitùs et *gratis* tradantur tres linguæ, *Hebraica, Græca, Latina*, salario satis magnifico circiter septuaginta ducatorum, quod tamen augeri possit pro ratione personæ. *Hebræus* jam adest, et item *Latinus*. *Græcam* professionem complures ambiunt. *Verùm meum consilium semper fuit, ut ascisceretur Græcus natus, unde statim germanam Græci sermonis pronunciationem imbibant auditores.* Ac meæ sententiæ subscribunt autores hujus negotii omnes, mihique mandârunt, ut suis verbis accerserem, quem judicassem ad hoc negotii idoneum. Quare te rogo, vel pro solita tua erga nos humanitate, vel pro tuo erga bonas literas favore, siquem nôsti, quem existimes et mihi et tibi futurum honori, cura ut quamprimùm huc advolet. Dabitur vaticum, dabitur salarium, dabitur locus. Erit illi res cum viris integerrimis et humanissimis. Neque minus fidat his meis literis, quàm si centum diplomatis res esset transacta. Inter bonos et absque syngraphis bene agitur. Tu cura ut deligas idoneum, ego curabo ne hominem huc venisse poeniteat. Bene vale, doctissime clarissimeque vir. *Lovanii, postridie divi Marci, Anno M.D.XVIII.*" (*Erasmii Epist.* 181. fol. Lond. 1642.)

* "As early as the sixth century, (says *Harris*, the author of *Hermes*,) or the seventh at farthest, *Latin* ceased to be the common language of Rome, whereas *Greek* was spoken with competent purity in Constantinople, even to the fifteenth century, when that city was taken by the Turks." *Harris' Philological Inquiries*, part ii. ch. 2. Dr. *Gillies* also remarks—"The Greek was spoken in the middle of the fifteenth century, when Constantinople was taken by the Turks; so that from the time of Homer, it subsisted with little variation as a *living tongue* for two thousand four hundred years."—*Gillies' Hist. of Greece*, vol. iv. p. 598. Note 59.

ancient purity and elegance. "The *vulgar speech* (says Philelphus) has been depraved and infected by the multitude of strangers and merchants, who every day flock to the city and mingle with the inhabitants. It is from the disciples of such a school, that the Latin language received the versions of Aristotle and Plato; so obscure in sense, and in spirit so poor. But the Greeks, who have escaped the contagion, are those whom we follow; and they alone are worthy of our imitation. In familiar discourse, they still speak the tongue of Aristophanes and Euripides, of the historians and philosophers of Athens; and the style of their writings is still more elaborate and correct. The persons, who, by their birth and offices, are attached to the Byzantine Court, are those who maintain, with the least alloy, the ancient standard of elegance and purity; and the native graces of language most conspicuously shine among the noble matrons, who are excluded from all intercourse with foreigners. With foreigners, do I say? They live retired and sequestered from the eyes of their fellow citizens. Seldom are they seen in the streets; and when they leave their houses, it is in the dusk of the evening, on visits to the churches and their nearest kindred. On these occasions they are on horseback, covered with a veil, and encompassed by their parents, their husbands, or their servants."*

The pronunciation, which the Greek exiles thus introduced among the learned of Europe was, as I have remarked, the *native pronunciation* of that age. It should also be remembered, that

* See Hody's learned work *De Græcis Illustribus Linguae Græcæ Literarumque Humaniorum Instauratoribus*, p. 188, for the original of this interesting letter. I have adopted the spirited translation which is to be found in *Gibbon's History*.

it was taught, not by mere illiterate adventurers—not by a class of men, whom Sir *Thomas Smith* contemptuously styles “*nescio qui semi-Turcici et obscuri Græci*” *—nor (as Sir *John Cheke* insinuates, with a degree of credulity and illiberality unworthy of a scholar) by a confederacy of impostors, who had conspired to obscure their language, in order to render it difficult to foreigners, and thus make it the source of greater profit to the teachers of it; a confederacy, which would have been as ridiculously impracticable, as a similar one would be among the teachers of a living language at the present day.† No; it was thus taught by the polite and well-educated nobles and the learned professors of Constantinople; who, being unable to rescue anything from the wreck of their fortunes, were, like the unhappy exiles of a polite and learned nation in our own times, compelled to resort to the occupation of teaching their language, in order to gain a subsistence; and this pronunciation was then received by the learned throughout Europe, as genuine, and so it continued until the period I am now about to mention.

In the sixteenth century a *new* or *reformed* pronunciation, as it was called, was promulgated by *Erasmus*, and countenanced by some other learned men, and at length received in various parts of Europe. This *new* pronunciation, it was contended, ap-

* *De Recta et Emendata Linguae Græcæ pronunciatione*; written in 1542, and republished by Havercamp in his *Sylloge Scriptorum qui de Ling. Græc. vera et recta pronunciatione Commentarios reliquerunt*, tom. 2. p. 552, Lugd. Bat. 1740.

† *Cheke*, *De Pronuntiatione Græcæ potissimum Linguae Disputationes cum Stephano Vintoniensi Episcopo*; written between 1542 and 1555, and republished by Havercamp in his *Sylloge Scriptorum* above cited, tom. ii. p. 235.

proached nearer than the prevailing one to that of the *ancient* Greeks ; and, as it was more conformable to the general pronunciation of the *modern languages* of Europe, and consequently was less difficult to acquire, it soon obtained currency among the learned. This change of pronunciation, if it were not supported by the authority of great names, to a person at all conversant with the powers of the organs of speech, and acquainted with the writings of the Greek grammarians and scholiasts which have come down to us, would appear to have been made upon very insufficient data, and without that comprehensive view of language, which has been taken by the scholars of our own times ; who, though not possessing more ability than their illustrious predecessors, yet have the benefit of their labours and many advantages besides, which were not then within the reach of scholars. The manner, in which this change is said to have been introduced, I shall presently relate at large. But it will first be necessary to give a general view of *the pronunciation of the Modern Greeks*, which has been the occasion of so much controversy among European scholars.

The pronunciation of the *modern* Greeks has been supposed to differ from that of their ancestors, both in the *sounds of the letters*, and in being regulated wholly by the *accents*, without regard to what is called *quantity*. The *accents* will be the subject of consideration hereafter ; at present I shall confine my remarks to *the sounds of the letters*. In doing this, I shall first present a *general view* of the pronunciation, (which will be found in the following table,) and then give a more particular account of the several letters, when taken single or in combination ; and I shall subjoin to each a concise statement of the arguments in favour of the *old*, and of the *new*, or *Erasmic*, pronunciation.

The *Alphabet* is pronounced by the *Modern Greeks* as follows :—

	Names of the letters.	Powers of the letters.
α	álpah	a, in our word <i>far</i> ; commonly called the Italian sound of <i>a</i> .
β	véetah	v.
γ	gámmah	g. Before α, ο, ω, the γ sounds as our <i>g</i> does before the corresponding English vowels ; which is usually called the <i>hard</i> sound of <i>g</i> . But before ε and ι, and the diphthongs having their sound, it is pronounced like our <i>y</i> ; for example, γέρας would be pronounced <i>yá-ras</i> ; and γίνομαι, <i>yé-nomay</i> . Before another γ, or ζ, ξ, χ, it takes the sound of <i>n</i> .
δ	dhéltah	dh, or (as <i>Walker</i> calls it in English) the <i>flat</i> sound of <i>th</i> , as in our word <i>this</i> . The power of the δ may be conveniently represented by <i>dh</i> , in order to distinguish it from that of θ, which has the <i>sharp</i> sound of <i>th</i> , as in <i>thin</i> .
ε	épsilon	e, in <i>met</i> , nearly, or in <i>there</i> .
ζ	zéetah	z.
η	eetah	ee ; or like <i>e</i> in the word <i>me</i> ; but, for distinction's sake, it may be represented by <i>ee</i> .
θ	théetah	th, in <i>thin</i> . See the remark above on the letter δ.
ι	yótah	i in <i>machine</i> , <i>marine</i> , &c.
κ	káppah	k ; but before the vowels ε and ι, and the diphthongs having the same sound with those vowels, it partakes of what <i>Walker</i> calls in English, the “softened” sound of the gutturals, as if it were followed by the letter <i>y</i> . Thus καὶ is pronounced 'kyá ; δίκαιος, dhée-kyaös.
λ	lámvthah (the <i>th</i> being sounded as in the word <i>this</i> .)	l. Before α, ε, ο, ω, it has the common English sound of <i>l</i> ; but before ι, and υ, and the diphthongs which are pronounced like <i>ee</i> , it has the liquid sound of <i>gl</i> in <i>seraglio</i> , which may be represented by 'ly ; as in λίμος, and λείμος, both pronounced 'lyemos.*
μ	mee	
ν	'nyee	n, before α, ε, ο, ω ; but before ι, υ, ει, &c. it has the sound of <i>gn</i> in the foreign words <i>seignior</i> , <i>bagnio</i> , &c. ; which may be denoted by 'ny.†

* I do not find this distinction in the sound of λ (depending on the vowel which follows it) noticed by any of the old writers or the modern travellers : But Mr. *Ciclitira* assures me, it is universally observed in Greece. The *Captain of The Jerusalem* also uniformly observed it in reading to me.

† This distinction in the sound of the ν appears to be equally unnoticed, by writers and travellers, with that of the λ ; but Mr. C. assures me it also is universal ; and the *Captain* likewise uniformly observed it.

Names of the letters.		Powers of the letters.
ξ	ksee	x, (or ks) as in <i>exercise</i> ; but never like gz, as in the word <i>example</i> , &c.
ο	ómicron	o in <i>not</i> , <i>for</i> , &c.
π	pee	p. When preceded by μ, it partakes of the sound of b; thus ἀμπελος is pronounced nearly as if written ámbelos.
ρ	rho	r.
σ	seegmah	s. This should always have the pure sound of s, and never that of z.
τ	tahf	t.
υ	ypsilon (pronounced épsilon)	y, as in the final syllables in English; for example, in <i>likely</i> , <i>lovely</i> , &c.
φ	phee	
χ	khee	kh, guttural; like the German <i>ch</i> final, or nearly like the Spanish guttural sound of x, &c.
ψ	psee	ps. It should be remarked, that the sound of the p in this letter is always preserved, both at the beginning and the end of syllables.
ω	oméggah	o; like the <i>omicron</i> .

The *diphthongs* are pronounced in the following manner:

αι	like	ai in <i>pain</i> ; or like <i>epsilon</i> .
ει	like	ei in <i>receive</i> , or long e.
οι	like	oe in <i>oeconomy</i> , or long e.
υι	like	ui in <i>guilt</i> , or more exactly like long e.
ου	like	ou in <i>you</i> ; or oo.
αυ	like	af or av, according to the nature of the consonant which follows it. For example; if a <i>sharp</i> consonant, (as Walker denominates them in English) that is, π, x, τ, &c. follows, then this diphthong is pronounced af; but if a <i>flat</i> consonant, as ς, γ, δ, &c. follows, then it is pronounced av.
ευ	like	ef or ev, as in the case of αυ.
ηυ	like	eev.
ωυ	like	ove or ofe.

It is only necessary to add in this place a few combinations of consonants. The principal ones are the following:

γγ, pronounced like ng. Thus, ἀγγελος is pronounced áng-gyelos.

γκ, like ng. Thus, ἐγκέφαλος is pronounced engéphalos.

μπ, at the beginning of words, like b; thus, the name of *Boston* would be written Μπόστον. But this is chiefly used in foreign names.

ντ, at the beginning of words, like d: Thus *Dover* would be written Ντόβερ. In *middle* syllables, ντ generally sound like nd; but there are some exceptions.

This is the *general pronunciation* of the Modern Greeks, as it is described by travellers, and as I learned it from the Greeks I have mentioned. The niceties, which distinguish the people of different provinces from each other, need not be regarded by foreigners. The purest Greek, it is admitted by all writers, is that which is spoken by people of the first class in Constantinople; and this is confirmed to me by Mr. Ciclitira, who has spent much of his life in that capital. I need not stop to remark, that *ancient* Greek (which has been used in their Church-Service from the first ages of Christianity to the present day) is pronounced by them in the same manner as the *modern*.

From this general view of the pronunciation it will be perceived, that many of the vowels and diphthongs are pronounced exactly alike; and hence superficial observers will be ready to ask, as was done in the days of Erasmus, how it is possible to distinguish these different letters, and thus determine what words are made use of by any one, that should address us with this kind of pronunciation. Instead of giving an answer of my own, I shall give that of a native Greek to the same question, proposed to him by a well known English scholar two centuries ago, as it is related in the following anecdote; which, as it is to be found only in a work not very common in this country, I will give at large. The anecdote is to be met with in the *Observations* subjoined to the edition of the *Poetæ Minores Græci*, published by Ralph Winterton, the well known professor in the University of Cambridge. After making some observations upon the corruptions of Greek Manuscripts, (occasioned by the confounding of letters which had the same sounds,) Winterton says—

“This brings to my mind a certain Greek, with whom I conversed soon after I came to the University. Upon my first meeting him, he put my ears to the torture by a pronunciation altogether unheard of by me till that time; for, when I asked him something, which I do not now recollect, he replied, like a person that did not understand what I had said, by asking—τί μὲ λέγεις κίριε. I was equally at a loss to know what he said, and I requested him to write it down, which he did with perfect correctness as to orthography, thus—τί μοι λέγεις, κύριε. I praised his *orthography*, but censured his *pronunciation*. He, on the other hand, condemned *my* pronunciation as coarse and rustic; for I pronounced according to our custom, *Ty moi legeis, kurie*; which, as soon as he had heard, he could not refrain from laughing, and said to me—προφέρεις ἀγρίως πῶς, that is, you pronounce in a rustic manner: “*Ακυσον, κίριε· δι’ ὧν προφέρεις, ἀστίως πως*, (I write as he pronounced) Hear me, Sir, you ought to *pronounce* as the people in cities (or polite people) do; thus, τί μὲ λέγεις, κίριε, ἄλλως δὲ γράφειν, but you must *write* differently, thus, τί μοι λέγεις, κύριε. I then proceeded to request him to write down the pronunciation of the vowels and diphthongs, which he did after this manner—

$$\Delta\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\ \pi\rho\omicron\phi\acute{\epsilon}\rho\epsilon\iota\nu\ \begin{matrix} \tau\acute{o} \\ \tau\grave{\eta}\nu \end{matrix} \left\{ \begin{matrix} \eta \\ \upsilon \\ \epsilon\iota \\ \omicron\iota \end{matrix} \right\} \begin{matrix} \acute{\omega}\varsigma\ \iota, \\ \omicron\tilde{\iota}\omicron\nu \end{matrix} \left\{ \begin{matrix} \tau\eta \\ \tau\upsilon \\ \tau\epsilon\iota \\ \tau\omicron\iota \end{matrix} \right\} \tau\iota. \\ \tau\grave{\eta}\nu\{\alpha\iota\}\ \acute{\omega}\varsigma\ \epsilon, \omicron\tilde{\iota}\omicron\nu\ \{\tau\alpha\iota\}\tau\epsilon.$$

By this method I began to comprehend him with ease, when he pronounced according to his manner. I continued thus: Πῶς οὖν διαφέρει ταῦτα ἀλλήλων, ἡμεῖς καὶ ὑμεῖς; ἢ πῶς διαγνοίη

τις ἄν, εἰ δὲ ὁμοίως προφέρειν, ἰμῖς, ἰμῖς; How then do these words ἡμεῖς and ὑμεῖς differ from each other, or how could any person distinguish them, if we must pronounce them both ἰμῖς, ἰμῖς? He replied—*δία τῆς συντάξεως*, *Thia tis syntaxeos*, ἰμῖς λέγομεν, ἰμῖς λέγετε,—by the syntax, or construction of the sentence.” This satisfactory answer, which was just such as Winterton himself would have given to the Greek, if he had asked a similar question about the *English* language, put an end to the dialogue. A more satisfactory one, indeed, could not have been given; and, if we were not in the habit of overlooking what is immediately before our eyes, it would appear surprising, that such an objection should ever have been made to this pronunciation; and by Englishmen too, whose language has a large share of what foreigners consider as absurdities arising from this very cause. With how much force could this Greek, if he had been acquainted with our language, have retorted the question, by saying—In *English* you have as many different letters to denote *similar sounds*, as we have in Greek; and how do you distinguish words which have the *same sound* but *different meanings* in English? For example; this very sound of *e* long, you express in a greater number of ways than we do in Greek;—

by æ, as in *Cæsar*, &c.

e, as in *scene*, *mete*, &c.

ee, as in *see*, *sees*, *seen*, *meet*.

ea, as in *sea*, *seas*, *meat*, *mean*.

ei, as in *seize*, *deceit*, *conceive*.

ie, as in *belief*, *chief*, *mien*.

i, as in *marine*, *fatigue*, *invalid*, &c.

To say nothing of the few words in which *eo*, *oe*, *eg* and *ua* have

this same sound. And if we take into view the *unaccented* syllables of English words, we find, that the whole list of vowels *a, e, i, o, u, y*, and some of the diphthongs are, in a great part of your language pronounced exactly alike !*

Such would have been the reasoning of this Greek in respect to the *English* language : And if we ourselves turn our attention for a moment to any foreign language, the *French*, for example, where innumerable words and phrases of different significations have precisely the same sound, and, though different to the eye are the same to the ear, we shall be much more forcibly struck with the futility of this objection. How absurd does it appear to us, for instance, that *é, ai, oi, ait, oit, aient* and *oient* in that language should all have the same sound, that of the letter *a* in English. How, again we may ask (as Winterton did the Greek) could any one distinguish in French between the *third person singular* and the *third person plural* of nearly all the verbs in the language, (except those which begin with a vowel or *h* mute, or which are followed by words that begin with those letters,) which are so frequently recurring in speaking the language? To descend to particulars ; how could any one determine when a Frenchman means to say, *he* should be, (*il seroit*,) or *they* should be, (*ils seroient*,) *he* speaks, (*il parle*,) or *they* speak, (*ils parlent*,) *he* was speaking, (*il parloit*,) or *they* were speaking, (*ils parloient*,) &c. with innumerable other expressions, which occur in every French sentence he utters? The answer is obvious ; *by the construction*, as the Greek observed to Winterton ; or in other words,

* I have been the better enabled to collect these various combinations of letters in our own language, by the aid of the *Memoir* of Mr. *Duponceau*, on *English Phonology*, before cited.

by use and familiarity with the language. Need it be remarked, that *Frenchmen* understand each other, and that the *Modern Greeks* do the same, notwithstanding these ambiguities, just as well as we do each other in our language? And can there be a doubt, that the Greeks of *ancient* times must have understood each other with just the same ease, that their descendants do, let their pronunciation have been as irregular, as the human mind can imagine it to have been? But, to return to the controversy alluded to.

Such, as I have above observed, was the pronunciation of Greek universally adopted in Europe, until the age of Erasmus; when that illustrious scholar promulgated a new or “reformed” pronunciation, which was afterwards called by his name. The occasion of his introducing this *reform*, as it was called, is certainly one of the most singular occurrences in the history of literature; but, singular as it may appear, it rests upon testimony hitherto unimpeached; and the biographers of Erasmus, as well as other writers, who mention the fact, do not attempt directly to controvert it. The anecdote seems to have been first published by *Gerard Vossius*; but I shall here give it (in a translation) with the accompanying remarks of *John Rodolph Wetstein*, and *John Michael Langius*; the latter of whom published it in his *Exercitationes Philologicæ de differentia Linguae Græcorum Veteris et Novæ sive Barbaro-Græcæ*. This same account was afterwards republished by Havercamp, by way of preface to his edition of the concise but satisfactory treatise of *Erasmus Schmidt* on the pronunciation of the Greek Language.*

* Havercamp, Sylloge Scriptorum &c. tom. ii. p. 626.

“We distinguish (says Langius) the pronunciation of Greek as the *Reuchlinian* or ancient, and the *Erasmic* or new; which latter is mostly used in our schools at the present day. The former takes its name from *John Reuchlin* of Phorca, (who died in 1521,)* because that very learned man was the first among the Germans, who was so much distinguished for his knowledge of Greek, that *Argyropylos*, a native Greek, upon hearing him speak the language, exclaimed, that *Greece had taken her flight across the Alps*; and it was from *Reuchlin* that the Greek scholars of this country [Germany] received their first pronunciation of the language; which was similar to that of the *Modern Greeks*. *Erasmus*, however, in consequence of an amusing incident, introduced that new-fangled pronunciation (unknown to the natives of Greece) which is now adopted in our schools, and is called, from its author, the *Erasmic* pronunciation. People now began, contrary to the custom of the ancients, to pronounce the letter β as *B* in the Latin language is commonly sounded; the letter η they made equivalent to *E* long; the diphthongs $\alpha\iota$, $\epsilon\iota$, $\omicron\iota$, they twisted in an execrable manner, and with a harsh sound almost into two distinct vowels; with many other conceits of the kind. But I will relate the whole story in the words of the celebrated *John Rodolph Wetstein*, as it is to be found in his *Orationes Apologeticæ pro Græca et Genuina linguæ Græcæ pronunciatione*, p. 119. ‘Let us see, says he, what opinion we ought to entertain of this new Pandora; and whether she received all her endowments and attractions from the Gods, or whether in truth

* *Reuchlin*’s name in German signifies *smoke*; and, according to the fashion of the day, it was *Latinized* into *Capnio*; by which he is more commonly mentioned in the works of that period.

she has not in some measure imposed upon her suitors by counterfeit charms. The garb, indeed, in which she is introduced to us, and by great names too, has the exterior of *antiquity*; but if we accurately examine this personage, we shall discover that she is of *modern* origin, and was introduced into the world by a signal fraud. Her parent was that phoenix of literature, the great Erasmus; who, in his *Dialogue on Pronunciation*, was the first person that dared to decide, how far the several letters had departed from their ancient sounds, and to point out by what means we might get back to the ancient purity. But that sage would never have gone such lengths as he did, had he not been led into a snare (and who, that is not more than human, is proof against such things?) by a trick of his friends; as will be seen in the following narrative, which you shall have in the words of the illustrious *Vossius*, who gives it upon the authority of *Henry Coracopetræus*.* ‘I heard *M. Rutgerus Reschius*, (says he,) who was professor of Greek in the *Busleiden* college and my revered preceptor, relate, that he was in the *Liliensian* seminary at the same time with Erasmus, who occupied an upper room and himself a lower one; that *Henry Glareanus* happened to arrive at Louvain from Paris and was invited to dine in the college; and when Glareanus was asked, what news he brought with him, he answered, (which was a story he had made up on the way, because he knew Erasmus to be over-fond of novelties and wonderfully credulous,) that certain native Greeks had arrived in Paris, who were men of great learning, and who used a pronunciation of the Greek Language entirely different from that, which prevailed in these parts;

* *Henry Ravensberg*, whom *Vossius* calls—“*viri egregie docti, doctisque perfamiliaris*.” See *Havercamp’s Sylloge*, tom. ii. p. 628.

as for instance, instead of calling β , *veetah*, they called it *batah*; for η , *eetah*, they said *atah*; for α [sounded *a*] they said *aye*; for α [sounded *ee*] they said *oy*, &c.* As soon as Erasmus heard this account, he wrote his *Dialogue* on the true pronunciation of the Greek and Latin languages, that he might appear to be the discoverer of this new method, and offered the work to *Peter*, a printer, at *Alost*, in order to have it published; but the printer declined doing it, either because he was engaged in other works, or because he could not undertake to publish it so soon as was desired, and Erasmus then sent the work to *Froben*, at Basle, by whom it was printed and immediately published. *Erasmus*, however, having discovered that a trick had been practised upon him, never afterwards used that pronunciation himself, nor did he direct his friends to adopt it. In proof of these facts, *M. Rutgerus* used to show, in Erasmus' own hand-writing, a manuscript system of pronunciation drawn up for the use of *Damian de Goez*, a Spaniard, which was not at all different from that adopted in all places where the language is used, both by the learned and the unlearned.† ‘*Erasmus himself* (continues *Wetstein*) had no faith in his own *Dialogue*. Who then shall require me to believe in it?

* The original is—Eos nempe sonare pro B *vita*, *beta*; pro H *ita*, *eta*; pro α *æ*, *AI*; pro α *i*, *oi* et sic in cæteris.

† “Ipsius Erasmi manuscriptam, in gratiam Damiani a Goes Hispani pronunciationis formulam” &c. After the words *pronunciationis formulam* there is, as Havercamp remarks, in the original of Vossius, this parenthesis—“(cujus exemplar adhuc apud me est.) Schedæ autem qua superiora narrantur, nequis ei fidem detraheret hoc modo, teste Vossio, subscribitur: *Henricus Coracopetræus Cuccensis*, Neomagi. clō lō lxix. pridie *Simonis et Judæ*. Hanc schedam, scriptam olim manu H. Coracopetræi, viri egregie docti, habere se profiteatur, isto loco, Vossius.”

That he continued to follow the prevailing mode of pronouncing, is apparent from his familiar *Colloquies*, particularly that which is called *Echo*; where, to the word *eruditionis*, Écho makes a response by ὄνοις; to *episcopi*, by πόποι; to *ariolari*, by λάροι; to *astrologi*, by λόγοι; to *grammatici*, by ἐιζῆ; to *famelici*, by λύκοι; every one of which corresponds with the common pronunciation of Greek; which, if he had known it to be erroneous, he would undoubtedly in his subsequent editions have taken pains to correct: But so far from this, he not only adhered to it himself, but took particular care, that it should be taught to those, who were entrusted to his charge.”

Such then, it should seem from this narrative, was the origin of the “*new*” or “*reformed*” pronunciation of the Greek language. The anecdote rests upon the authority of *Coracopetræus*; and doubts have been entertained, by some persons, of its authenticity. But those doubts appear to be founded, rather upon the singularity of the occurrence, than upon any want of credibility in the witness; for his character stands unimpeached, and the fact does not appear to have been questioned by the writers who lived nearest to that period. *Gerard John Vossius*, (who lived within a century after *Coracopetræus*,) a staunch Erasmian and sufficiently inclined to detect the falsehood of the story, if it were false, does not call it in question; but, on the contrary, speaks of it as a circumstance not known to many persons, and thinks it important to lay it before his readers, in order to make them acquainted with the motives, which impelled Erasmus to write on this subject;* and he endeavours to account for Eras-

* “Erasmus, qua occasione ad scribendum de Recta Pronunciatione fuerit impulsus, paucis cognitum arbitror. Itaque visum hac de re adjicere quod in

mus^o not adhering to his new pronunciation himself, by supposing, that he abandoned it in consequence of the difficulty of overcoming his old habits, and of making the public follow him in his innovations, however well founded they might be.* Nor does *Havercamp* (who was also an advocate for the Erasmian pronunciation, and from whom, as the editor of the controversial tracts on this question, we should naturally have expected an investigation of the truth of the narrative,) venture to deny it; but contents himself with remarking, that *he does not wish to discuss the credibility of the testimony of Coracopetræus*—"de cujus testimonii veritate (says he) disputare nolumus." The narrative is also republished from Vossius by *Jortin*, in his life of Erasmus, without any intimation, that I have observed, of its being questionable.

That such a change, however, in the pronunciation of the Greek language should have been thus effected, seems at first view hardly possible. But when we consider, that by this change *Greek* was more assimilated to the languages of Europe in general, and consequently became more easy to the learner; and when we reflect upon the great influence of names at that period—

scheda quadam habeo, scripta olim manu *Henrici Coracopetræi*, viri egregie docti, doctisque perfamiliaris. Ea ita habet &c. and then Vossius relates the story at large.

* "Verum cum Achillea sint pleraque omnia quibus ab Erasmo atque aliis refellitur vulgaris isthæc loquendi ratio, neutiquam in animum inducere possum, quod Erasmus cam retinuerit, nec amicos ab ea deterruerit, id eo factum, quod editi libelli pæniteret; verum magis mihi verisimile fit, cum meliora videret probatque, deteriora tamen sequutum; sive quid a puero sic loqui adsuevisset; sive quod desperaret suo se exemplo alios ad imitationem provocare posse; sive quod loquendum putarit cum vulgo, sapiendum cum paucis, ut præcepit τῆς ἀληθείας Philosophus." Vossu *Aristarch*, lib. i. c. 28.

of names too, which would scarcely have less authority in our own times, it will cease to appear extraordinary. And, as the *ancient Greek* was not studied for the purposes of conversation, the learned were willing to spare themselves the labour of studying its pronunciation. When, therefore, the idea was once published among Europeans of speaking Greek, as they did their own languages, and that method was defended too, as being nearer to the ancient, the contagion spread, and the pronunciation of the modern Greeks was by degrees neglected. The "*new*" pronunciation, however, was not received at first with much favour; so far from it, that a warm controversy arose among the principal scholars of that day, of which I shall incidentally give some account as I proceed; for a controversy, conducted by such distinguished advocates, cannot fail of being interesting to us, even after the lapse of several centuries. Whether, indeed, the anecdote above related of Erasmus is true or not, is of little consequence as to the merits of the present question. We can employ ourselves more usefully in examining the arguments, which were urged by him and his friends in support of their innovation, and the answers which were made by their adversaries; and this I shall now proceed to do, with as much conciseness as possible, from the principal writers in the controversy; adding such further observations, as are furnished by the researches and discoveries of our own times. In doing this, it will be most convenient to follow the order of the Alphabet.

A.

The pronunciation of the letter α is undisputed. All scholars agree, that it was sounded by the *ancient* Greeks as it is by their descendants, and by all the nations of Europe at this day, except the English; that is, like what we call the Italian *a*, in our word *father*, &c. which sound, by itself, we should express in English by *ah*. It will not be uninteresting to see how minutely it is described by *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*: 'Αυτῶν δὲ τῶν μακρῶν εὐφωνότατον τὸ α , ὅταν ἐκτείνηται· λέγεται γὰρ ἀνοιγομένου τοῦ στόματος ἐπὶ πλεῖστον, καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ἄνω φερομένου πρὸς τὸν οὐρανόν: Of the long [vowels] α is the most sonorous, when it is prolonged (or a stress is laid upon it;) for it is uttered with the mouth wide open, the breath being at the same time impelled upwards towards the roof of the mouth.*

B.

The ancient pronunciation of the letter *Beta* has been the subject of much controversy. The *Modern Greeks* pronounce it like our *V*, and call its name $\beta\eta\tau\alpha$, *veetah*; the followers of *Erasmus* on the other hand assert, that it should be pronounced like the Roman *B*, which, they at the same time contend, was anciently sounded in *Latin*, just as it is in *Italian* and other modern languages; but the correctness of this latter opinion, we shall find, there are many strong reasons for doubting.

The first, and principal argument of *Erasmus* (who indeed did not support his opinions on this subject with such an array of authorities as some of his followers) is founded upon a well known

* *Dionys. Hal. de Structura Orationis*, sect. 14. edit. Upton, p. 94.

passage in one of *Cicero's* letters, where there are some remarks upon *equivokes*; among which *Cicero* mentions the word *bini*, (sounded, as *Erasmus* takes for granted, *beenee*) which in *Latin* has a different signification from *βινει* in Greek. Now, says *Erasmus*, if the Greek word was pronounced by the *ancient*, as it is by the *Modern Greeks*, *veenee*, the *Latin* word and the *Greek* one could not have been enough alike in sound, to have given room for a double meaning, any more than the two words *bini* and *vini* could have done in the *Latin* language. The same argument was afterwards much relied on by other writers in the controversy; the chief of whom were—*James Ceratinus*, a learned Dutchman, who in 1529 dedicated to *Erasmus* a short treatise on the Pronunciation of Greek*—*Theodore Beza*—and *Henry Stephens*; to which number should be added *Adolphus Mekerchus* (*Metkerke*); whose treatise, however, is so gross a plagiarism from *Beza's*, that the editor, *Havercamp*, feels it to be a stain upon the Belgian character; and he feebly excuses it by remarking, that *Henry Stephens*, no very forgiving censor, had pardoned *Metkerke*, and (as is the fact) had made use of his strong arguments himself. Let us now see what answer may be given to the argument from *Cicero*.

Of the several writers, whose tracts in this controversy have been published by *Havercamp*, in his *Sylloge Scriptorum* before cited, there are three in defence of the pronunciation of the *Modern Greeks*; they are—*Gardiner*, the well known Bishop of Winchester and Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, who

* *Ceratinus's* family name, according to the biographers, was *Tryng*; he was born at *Hoorn* or *Horn* in Holland; whence, according to the fashion of the age, he formed his name of *Ceratinus*, through the Greek *κέρας*, a horn.

wrote with no contemptible ability in reply to Sir *John Cheke*, and by an Edict as head of the University, positively forbade the teaching of the new or *Erasmian* method; *Gregory Martin*, who made a learned reply to *Mekerchus*; and *Erasmus Schmidt*, a German, whose concise, but learned and able treatise will be more particularly noticed in the course of this inquiry. Of these three writers, *Martin* alone seems to have attempted (and that not with complete success) to answer specifically the argument from *Cicero*. He agrees with *Mekerchus*, that the *Latin* and *Greek* words are made *alike in sound* by *Cicero*; but he asks him to point out, in what part of them the similarity exists. "Si tu pugnes (says he) de β , quod sonandum sit ut *B*, ego de ϵ contendo, quod in eodem loco pronunciatur ut *i*," &c. "If you contend, that the resemblance in sound lies in the β , which is therefore to be pronounced like *b*, I maintain that it lies in the ϵ , which is to be pronounced like the letter *i*. If you reply, that the letter *i* among the Romans sounded like ϵ , take care lest, while you are over-solicitous to make them alike, you inadvertently establish a difference between them. For β ivei in Greek you yourself, I presume, read *binei*; but *bini* in *Latin*, according to your own opinion also, must be read *beinei*; so that there is a marked distinction between the two."* The argument thus far does not seem by any means satisfactory; for if, as he contended (and as was the case) the ϵ and *i* were alike in *sound* but differed only in *quantity* still unless the Greek β and the Latin *B* very closely resembled each other, there could hardly have been room for

Gregor. Martin, De Græcarum Literarum Pronunciatione ap. *Havercamp*.
Syllog. tom. ii. p. 587.

an *equivoque* that would be endured even by the gross ear of a foreigner, as Cicero was in respect to the *Greek* language. That there was such a resemblance can now be more satisfactorily shown, than it could have been at the time when *Martin* wrote; but the resemblance probably must have consisted in this, that the Roman *B* and the Greek β were sounded rather like the letter *V*, than the *B*, of modern languages. That the Roman *B* had that sound for a long period, is manifest from its being perpetually confounded with it in writing. *Martin*, indeed, intimates that he thought something of this kind probable—"Superest alia *conjectura* (says he) quando jam ista necessario confundenda sint, ut dicamus *b* olim priscis Romanis aspiratè magis sonuisse quam nunc: non tamen ut in *V* consonante fit, labiis valde apertis, sed conjunctis magis et compressis, ut sit quasi *bvini* dissyllabum, quod hodie quoque apud Burgenses fit in Hispania, qui *vestia* pro *bestia*, *vene* pro *bene* exiguo admodum vocum discrimine pronunciant."

If *Martin* had been in possession of all the information, which the researches of later scholars have brought to light, he would not have expressed himself with so much hesitation on this point. He might have stated it not merely as a "conjecture," but as an opinion supported by very strong evidence, that the Romans did for a long period pronounce their *B* so nearly like *V*, as in general not to be distinguishable from it, at least by the ears of foreigners; just as is the case with the *Spaniards* at the present day.* In proof of this, it will suffice to refer to the authorities

* I have often thought it probable, that the *Spaniards* and *Portuguese*, who were a Roman colony, may have retained more of the ancient masculine pronunciation of the Romans, though tinged perhaps with a *provincial* rusticity, than is

collected in *Heineccius'* elaborate edition of the well known work of *Brissonius*, *De Verborum quæ ad Jus Civile pertinent significatione*: A multitude of other instances may be found in *Gruter*, and other writers on Roman antiquities.

“*B*, secunda alphabeti apud Latinos litera. Quum vero illa *Græcorum* *βῆτα* respondeat, hæc autem litera a Græcis ita pronuncietur ut ea et *V* Latinorum exprimere soleant, e. g. *Βῆτοι* pro *Veis* apud *Plutarch.* in *Camill.* p. 129. *λίβιος* pro *Livio*, apud eumd. in *Romulo*, p. 36. *φλάβία* pro *Flavia*, apud *Reines. Inscr.* adpend. p. 35. factum inde est, ut in vetustis monumentis, maxime quæ a seculo quarto prodierunt fere perpetua sit literarum *B* et *V* permutatio. Hinc in marmoribus apud *Gruter*, p. DCLXXXI, 7. VIVIANUS legitur pro *Vibiano* apud *Reines. Inscr.* I, 45, BICTORINVS pro *Victorino*; apud *Gruter*, p. DCCXVIII, 6, ABITA pro *Avita*, in l. 11. C. *Theod. de Cohortat.* VASTAGA pro *Bastaga*: Ut innumera alia præteream, inter quæ etiam est ridiculum illud a V. C. *Ev. Ottone* observatum apud *Fabrett.* p. 546. CONIVGI BENE BIBENTI, pro *Bene Viventi*.”

From these instances and others, (which go back to a period but little subsequent to the age of *Cicero* himself,) it will appear, that for many ages there was little or no difference, in the ordinary pronunciation, between the *B* and the *V* of the Romans; and

to be found even in *Italy* itself; for the Latin language throughout *Italy*, which was the great theatre of the operations of their enemies, the *Goths*, must have been much corrupted by the constant and immediate influence of the language of those invaders; while the provinces of *Spain* and *Portugal*, being remote from that influence, might preserve the language, which they originally received from their Roman masters, in greater purity than the people of *Italy*.

consequently, between the Roman *B* and the Greek *Beta*. Perhaps their true sound was one between our *V* and *W*, like the *W* in German; which would be formed by barely touching the upper teeth to the lower lip, instead of pressing them so strongly upon it as we are accustomed to do in pronouncing our *V*. That the Roman *B*, however, suffered some slight changes in sound at different periods, is not improbable; and it might be hazardous to assert, that in the age of *Cicero*, it had exactly the same sound, which was given to it three or four centuries afterwards, when we find the inscriptions above referred to. If, however, we ascertain the pronunciation, which was used even at this latter period, it would be sufficiently near to that of the Augustan age, to satisfy the most fastidious ears of foreigners.*

Another argument of *Erasmus* is, the common, though very inconclusive one, founded on the etymologies of *Latin* words from the Greek; as that $\beta\tilde{\alpha}\varsigma$ in Greek becomes *bos* in Latin; $\beta\omicron\tilde{\alpha}\nu$, *boare*; $\tau\upsilon\gamma\epsilon\tilde{\alpha}\nu$, *turbare*; $\beta\alpha\lambda\alpha\nu\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\omicron\nu$, *balucum*, etc.† This also rests upon the assumption, that the Latin *B* and Greek β were both sounded like the modern *B*; which, as we have just seen, for

* Since these remarks were written, I have obtained a copy of the *Herculanensia*, or *Archeological and Philological Dissertations*, by *Drummond & Walpole*; by means of which interesting work, the evidence of the similarity of the Roman *B* and *V* is now carried back to the Augustan age. In the *tenth Dissertation* the author (*Walpole*) observes—"Capacio has published some *Latin* inscriptions which were found at *Herculaneum*, without any comments on them. I shall point out what appears to be worthy of notice in them. In the first inscription we have *devitum* for *debitum*." The author then also adds—"I find the changes of *B* and *V* very common in the *early Christian* inscriptions, as *BIXIT* for *Vixit*; *BIRGO* for *Virgo*." p. 172.

† *Erasm. Dialog.* p. 122.

a very long period, was not the case. But we can also, on the other hand, find a great number of Latin words, beginning with *V*, which are derived from Greek ones beginning with β ; as *vado* from $\beta\acute{\alpha}\delta\omega$, *volo* from $\beta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$, *via* from $\beta\iota\alpha$, etc. which (to apply this reasoning) would prove that the Greek β and Roman *V* sounded alike.

Equally inconclusive are several other arguments adduced by the writers in this controversy; as, 1. That $\beta\eta\tau\alpha$ is a *middle* letter between the smooth letter π and the aspirate ϕ ; an appellation, which might properly be applied to it, whether it is to be sounded like *B* or like *V*.* 2. That the very name, *Alphabetum* (which, says Metkerke, nobody pronounces *alphavitum*) shows that *Beta* ought to be sounded like *B*. But this is plainly assuming the thing in question. 3. That *Beta* is derived from the Hebrew *Beth*, by adding *a*; and hence the Greeks, when they write Hebrew or Latin words having a *B* in them, always write them with β , as may be seen in *Plutarch*, *Dion* and others. This argument is liable to the same objections as the others; and it will, moreover, presently be seen, that the argument from the *Hebrew* is directly against the Erasmic pronunciation.

But the argument, which is considered as the most decisive in favour of the Erasmic pronunciation of *Beta* (which was not, however, adduced in Erasmus' Dialogue) is the well known line cited by *Eustathius* from *Cratinus*, to mimic the bleating of a sheep.

Ο' δ' ηλίθιος ὥσπερ πρόβατον, Βῆ, Βῆ, λέγων βεδίζει.

Now, says *Beza*, after citing this line, if the syllables Βῆ, Βῆ, express the bleating of a sheep, they must have been pronounced

* Beza, p. 311. H. Steph. p. 446. Metkerke, p. 54.

be, be, and not *ve, ve*; that is, (to express in *English* the sounds thus expressed by Beza in Latin) *bay, bay*, and not *vay, vay*.

While I was at college, studying Greek with the aid of no other book than my *Port-Royal Grammar*, (which, with all its excellencies, contains but little on the subject of *pronunciation*, because probably the learned author did not consider that as an essential part of his plan,) I was much struck with this argument; which then appeared to me unanswerable. Further reflection, however, has led me to think, that too much importance has been given to arguments drawn from this and other *animal sounds*; which, as they form no part of any human language, no nation has any settled conventional sign, or word, to express. We accordingly find, therefore, that not only people of different nations, but individuals of the same nation, represent such sounds by letters of very different powers. This did, in fact, happen within my own observation in the case of this very sound; for when I once asked Mr. Ciclitira and Captain Katara (at different times) how they would express it in *Modern Greek*, the former wrote it $\mu\pi\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon$, $\mu\pi\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon$, that is *bay, bay*, and the latter $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon$, $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon$, or *may, may*; and perhaps a third would have written it $\mu\pi\acute{\alpha}\alpha$, $\mu\pi\acute{\alpha}\alpha$, just as we commonly do in English, *bah, bah*. But great weight has been attached to this argument, from the days of Erasmus to more modern times; when we find *Gibbon* remarking (though, perhaps, as much for the sake of indulging his spleen against the clergy, as of defending the *reformed* pronunciation) that this “monosyllable $\beta\eta$ represented to an Attic ear the bleating of sheep; and a belwether is better evidence than a bishop or a chancellor.”* I shall, therefore, state at large the answer, which was given to it

* Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, ch. 66.

three centuries ago by *Erasmus Schmidt*, in the Treatise I have already mentioned.

“As to the bleating of sheep (says he) whose cry is not *bi, bi*, [in *English bee, bee*] but *bê, bê*, [i. e. *bay, bay*,] it must be recollected, that in these and similar words, whose sound is an echo to the sense, we do not express with precision the inarticulate voice of brutes, which indeed itself is not always uniform. Thus the Greeks express the cry of a sheep by $\beta\eta, \beta\eta$, which others express by *blä, blä* [*blay, blay*,] and the Latins by *ba, ba* [*bah, bah*,] from *balandi*; while others again express it by *ma, ma*, [i. e. *mah, mah*] or *mä, mä*, [i. e. *may, may*.] It cannot therefore be proved by this, that the η was exactly equivalent to the ϵ or to the $\ddot{a}$ or to the α ; or that the β is exactly equivalent to the μ . In like manner the Greeks expressed the barking of a dog by the verb $\betaαύζειν$, whether it is to be pronounced *bau* or *bav*; but the Germans express the same thing by *miffen, meffen, maffen, muffen*, and sometimes by *hau, hau, hau*; thus using different vowels and different consonants. Shall we therefore say, that those letters all have the same power? *Aristophanes* expresses a dog's barking by $\acute{\alpha}\tilde{v}, \acute{\alpha}\tilde{v}$, that is, either *au, au*, or *av, av*; for different dogs sound it both ways.

“The voice of the *lark* we express by *lir, lir*, whereas that bird modulates its notes rather to the sound of other vowels than the *I*; and the Germans themselves call it from its voice, *lerche*. Shall we then argue, that *i* and *e* are the same?

“The *Latins* have named the cuckow *cuculus*, with the letter *u*, while the Greeks, from the same sound, have called it $\kappa\acute{o}\kappa\upsilon\gamma\alpha$: Is the *o* therefore to be pronounced like the *u*; for the note of the cuckow has the sound of *u* more than of *o*? The sound is, *cuc-*

uc, not *cococ*, or as the innovators (the Νέοφύτοι) pronounce it, cöcöc.

“The sound of a *trumpet* is expressed by *taratantara*; although we can imagine in it the sound of other vowels more easily than that of *a* only.

“The sound of a lash or thong, is expressed in *Plautus* by the word *tax*. Others express it by *kliszsch*, *klatsch*, *schmitz*, *schmatz*, *patzsch*, *peitzch*, &c. Has *x* therefore the same sound with *tz*, or *tzch*? Or are these different vowels equivalent to each other? The same remark may be made of various other words of this kind”—

“*Schmidt* then adds, with some humour—“*Nimis ergo infirmum fundamentum suæ pronunciationis posuere miseri illi verveces, qui vocem ovium substravere. Quâ tamen, si ita lubet, uti eos, imo et ovium more, tremulum τὸ η pronunciare facile patiemur.*”*

By this time, perhaps, this celebrated argument will appear to be less conclusive in respect to the sound of the *Beta*, than might at first view be supposed. The truth probably is, that the syllable $\beta\tilde{\eta}$ was used in this instance, not because it perfectly represented the sound in question, but because (to *Cratinus*' ear at least) it only expressed it with more exactness, than any other syllable to be found in the Greek language. And why is it not just as probable, that so long ago as when *Cratinus* flourished, this writer should have contented himself with a word, which was only an *approximation* to the true sound, as that the grammarians and lexicographers down to the time of *Phavorinus* (only three hundred years ago, when we know that the β had the sound of *V*)

* Havercamp, Sylloge, tom. ii. p. 661.

should have transmitted this word from age to age, without ever intimating, that it was a poor imitation, because it began with a letter, which sounded like *V* and not like *B*? Yet it has been so transmitted to us; and *Phavorinus*, following *Eustathius* and the *Etymologicon Magnum*, makes no other remark than this—(after speaking of several other words which the ancients used to express various noises) 'Οἱ δὲ αὐτοί (the ancients) φάσιν ὁμοίως μιμητικῶς καὶ Βῆ οὐ μὴν Βαὶ μίμησιν προβάτων φωνῆς. Κρατῖνος,

'Ο δ' ἡλίθιος ὥσπερ πρόβατον Βῆ Βῆ λέγων βαδίζει.*

Here, we find, that although *Phavorinus* notices the word so particularly, as to tell his readers, that the ancients wrote it βῆ and not βαί, (which, in his time, we know were pronounced *vee* and *vay*) yet he says not a word implying, that it was an imperfect representation of the sound in consequence of its beginning with a *Beta*.

Another argument for the *Erasmic* pronunciation of the *Beta* is founded upon the practice of the Greeks in writing *Roman* names; in which case it is urged (and with truth) that they rendered the *B* by their β; as in *Fabius*, *Tiberius*, *Gabinus*, which they wrote Φάβιος, Τιβερίος, Γαβίνιος, etc.; and on the other hand, the *Romans* used their *B* for the Greek β, when they had occasion to write Greek names, as *Bacchus* for Βάκχος, etc. *Beza*, however, candidly admits, that this is by no means satisfactory; because the Greeks not only represented the Roman *B*, but the *V* also by β; of which he adduces some instances himself, as Βερρήης, Βαλέριος, for *Verres*, *Valerius*, etc.; and it is a well known fact, that in Roman names, which had a *V* in them, the

* *Phavorin.* 1186. v. Λιτάς.

Greek writers made use of the letter β and the diphthong ou , indifferently, to represent that letter. Hence *Virgil* was called sometimes Βεργίλιος and sometimes 'Ουεργίλιος ; *Valerius* was either Βαλέριος or 'Ουαλέριος . Now, as the learned all agree, that this diphthong was sounded like the French *ou*, or the English *oo* (which is also the pronunciation of the Modern Greeks) it follows, that, whether the two Roman letters *B* and *V* sounded alike or not, the Greek β and the diphthong ou must have been alike; and consequently, that the *Beta* must have represented the Roman *V* with as much exactness, as the diphthong ou did. And it is certainly a striking fact, that this diversity of orthography, in writing foreign names, has descended to the Modern Greeks; for when they write names having a *V* (or a *W*) in them, they sometimes use β and sometimes ou , as may be seen in the following instances, taken from *Meletius'* Geography;* some of which, however familiar to us in our own language, will hardly be recognized in a Greek dress:

V rendered by β and ou :

Βενετία		Venice
Βερσαϊλλες	or 'Ουερσαλία ,	Versailles
Βερμونت		Vermont
Βιργινία	or 'Ουιργινία	Virginia
Πεννσιλβανία	or Πεννσιλουανία ,	Pennsylvania, etc.

* *Μελετίου γεωγραφία παλαιά και νέα*, etc. the second edition, in 4 vols. 8vo. printed at Venice in 1807.

W rendered by β or *ou*:

Βασιγγτόν,	Washington
Βισκασσέτ,	Wiscasset
Βιλμιγγτόν,	Wilmington
Ὀυαλλία,	Wales
Ὀυίλνα,	Wilna
Ὀυατερφόρδ or Βατερφόρδ,	Waterford, etc.

But the most valuable and interesting monuments of antiquity, relating to the subject now under consideration, are the *Greek Versions* of the *Roman Law*, and the *Greek Commentaries* upon it. In those *Versions* and *Commentaries*, we do not merely find a few scattered proper names of Romans, written in Greek, as is the case in the small number of Greek historians, that have come down to our times; but in every page we meet with *technical and other words* of the *Roman Law*, which, as they could not be well translated, were adopted, almost in their native *Latin* form, and only written in *Greek characters*. Now, although these *Versions* will not be esteemed of so high authority, as the writings of the Augustan age, yet, when we find in them a great weight of evidence, proving, that the pronunciation of Greek has remained unchanged from the age of *Justinian* to the present time, (a period of about *thirteen* centuries,) we shall not readily believe, that any material change could have taken place in the comparatively short period of the *five* preceding centuries; which would carry us back to the Augustan age. I shall cite only a few examples as to the letter *Beta*. In some parts of the *Code*, the Emperor *Valentinian* is called in Greek Βαλεντινιανός, while in others, his name is writ-

ten 'Ουαλεντινιανός.* The Emperor *Justinian's* title of *Vandalicus* is commonly written Βανδαλικός, as in tit. xvii. 3.; and in the same law, the Latin phrase *post Vandalica trophæa* is rendered by, μετὰ τὸ κατὰ Βανδίων τρώπαιον; and the emperor's name is usually written φλα Βιος Ιουστινιανός. Of *technical* words, where the Latin *V* is rendered by the Greek β, we find innumerable instances, like the following—βακάντια (*vacantia*, sc. bona) βεκτιγάλιοι, βινδικτα, βολουντας, ιντερ-βίβος, ιντερβάλλουμ, πραεβαρικάτωρ, πριβάτα, προ-βιρίλι, σακρα-βια, σεπούλκρι-βιολατι, etc. I will add but one instance more of this kind; which contains, at the same time, an example of the use of the letter *B* for *V*, and a rule of the testamentary law of the Romans, to which a professional reader may trace a rule of our own law: It is to be found in the curious work of *Eustathius* Περί χρονικῶν διαστημάτων ἀπὸ ῥοπῆς ἕως ῥ' ἐτῶν: *De Temporalibus Intervallis à momento usque ad centum annos*; or, as we should say in technical language, *On Limitations, from one moment to an hundred years*: Εἰσω λ' ἡμερῶν ὀφείλει ἀρχεσθαι ὁ κληρονόμος τοῦ INBENTΑΡΙΟΥ μετὰ τὸ ἀνοιγῆναι τὴν διαθήκην, etc. *Intra dies triginta debet hæres InVentarium incipere postquam apertum fuerit testamentum*, etc.†

The argument also, which is founded on the Greek method of writing *Hebrew* words, and which has been adduced in support of the *Erasmian* pronunciation of *Beta*, is, in truth, against it; for it will be found, as both *Martin* and *Schmidt* observe, that the Greeks used their β to represent not only the Hebrew כ (both *without the Dagesh* and with it) but also the Hebrew י; as in ד'י' Δαβίδ, םהך' א' Αβρααμ, etc. instances of which may be found in every page of the *Septuagint*.

* Cod. I. i. 3. and I. xii.

† *Eustath. ap. Cujac.* tom. i. 566.

Γ.

The letter γ , when single, has two sounds in Modern Greek. Before α , o , ω , ov , it has, what we call in English, the *hard* sound of *G*, as in *game*, *gone*, &c. ; but before ϵ and i , it has the sound of the Italian *J*, or our *Y*: Thus (to take an example from *Velastus'* Treatise) $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\rho\alpha\varsigma$ is pronounced *yáras*; $\gamma\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$, *yeenomay*.

The former of these sounds is universally admitted by the learned to be the ancient one; but the latter has been much contested; and among the reasons for controverting it, *Metkerke* (copying from *Beza*, as usual) assigns this very extraordinary one—that we cannot give *two different sounds* to the same letter without acknowledging a degree of poverty in the Greek language, which is not credible! To which *Martin* very justly replies, that this reasoning is “*plane ridiculum*,” and only betrays *Metkerke's* own “poverty of argument.” *Martin* then proceeds to defend it upon the ground of usage; which, so far as my inquiries have gone, is the only ground upon which it can rest; and this, surely, (if I may use a professional phrase,) is sufficient to throw the burden of proof upon those who condemn the pronunciation as spurious. It may, however, be further observed, that this soft sound of the γ might once have been similar to that, which is sometimes given to the *G* in English, in the words *guide*, *disguise*, &c. as if written *gyide*, *disgyise*; from which it may have naturally changed to the simple sound of *y*, as we now find it. Indeed, in some combinations, it does take a sound which cannot be distinguished from this.

But the pronunciation, which was most controverted by some of the *Erasmians*, is that, which is given to this letter, when it precedes another γ , or α , ξ , or χ ; in which cases the *Modern Greeks* give it the sound of *n*, as we have always been accus-

tomed to do, and as is now the practice in Europe. This pronunciation, so different from the usual sound of the letter *G* in European languages, was received from the Greek exiles themselves; and as they could not have produced any other authority for it, than they did for the pronunciation of many other letters of the alphabet, that is, *their own invariable usage*, it seems surprising, that the learned were willing to tolerate this, any more than the other peculiarities of the *Modern Greek* pronunciation. It was, indeed, opposed with so much learning and ingenuity, by *Beza* and *Henry Stephens*, that great doubt has been entertained, whether it was genuine. But, as we now have evidence, which, it is not saying too much, to call conclusive, (as will presently appear,) it will be a useful lesson to us, who are but *foreigners* as to this question, to recur to the *theoretical* arguments, which those eminent men and their followers have urged against it. It will teach us to be cautious, in questions of this nature, how we condemn the universal and very ancient usage of a whole people, whenever it happens to be repugnant to our own habits or prejudices.

Beza, after some remarks on *Theodore Gaza* and the “grammarians,” asks, “why cannot the double γ be pronounced by the *Greeks*, as well as by the *Latins* in their words *aggrego*, *agger*,” &c. and he then goes on, in a decided tone, to assert, that “neither the double γ is to be found among the *Greeks*, nor the γ written before α or χ ; and that what *Gaza* adds in his rule about the ξ is idle, because neither γ nor ν are to be found before ξ among the *Greeks*; but the grammarians have been deceived in this matter; for they have not considered, (as he remarks with ingenuity,) that the copyists of books, before the invention of printing, did

not write in large or *capital* letters, but in *small ones*, fashioned after the *ancient capitals*, but still with some slight differences; and thus, in transcribing, they would by lengthening and widening the ν before a γ , make it resemble the latter so much as to be mistaken for it."* He then informs the reader, that in a very old MS. of St. Paul's Epistles, which was written in *capitals*, he had seen the following words written with a ν instead of a γ : ANΓΕΛΟΣ, ANKYPA, ANKAΛH.

However ingenious this conjecture of *Beza* may appear, and however well supported it may seem to be, yet it is all overthrown by the evidence now in possession of the learned, to which I have just alluded; that is, the *Herculanean Manuscripts*; which, as Dr. Burney justly observes of one of them, are "undoubtedly the most curious publication, on the whole, which has appeared since the revival of letters."† I shall make no apology for introducing in this place a translation of the entire note of the learned editor on the pronunciation of the letter now under consideration. It is taken from the *second* volume of the Man-

* *Beza*, De germana pronuntiatione Græc. Ling. ap. *Havercamp. Syllog.* tom. i. p. 314, 315.

† See *Rees' Cyclopædia*, art. PHILODEMI DE MUSICA. Dr. Burney states, that no copies of this work had reached England till 1801, (though it had been then published several years,) when "Dr. *Cracherode* procured possession of two copies." It is honourable to our country, that we now have in this vicinity three copies, at least, of this interesting publication; one of which is in the Library of the University at Cambridge, and another in that valuable repository of literature, the *Boston Athenæum*. This institution, indeed, is the only one, I believe, that possesses the *second* volume of these MSS. containing part of the works of *Epicurus* and some fragments of a Latin poem. This volume was not printed till 1809.

uscripts, which contains a part of *Epicurus*. The note is to be found at p. 23, where the word *συνκρίσεις* occurs, written incorrectly with a *ν* instead of *γ*; upon which, the editor says to his reader—"It will be observed, that the original manuscript has here *συνκρίσεις*, with N instead of Γ; which is to be ascribed only to the inattention of the copyist. For you must take care, that you do not adopt the opinion of *Stephens*, *Beza*, and others; (cited by Jo. Simon, in his *Introductio Grammatico-Critica*, sect. 2.) who, because they found in a manuscript written in *capitals* the words *ανγελος*, *ανκυρα*, written as *συνκρίσεις* is in this place, supposed, that the grammarians, when they directed *γαμμα* to be written for *νν* before the palatal letters, were deceived by the lengthened figure of the *ν*, which looked like a *γ*. Now in these *Papyri*, which are written in *capitals*, *γαμμα* is constantly written before the palatal letters, (although sometimes the transcriber erroneously departs from this orthography,) as may be seen in this very volume, (or *roll*) where, at col. ix, v. 12, you find *εγχειρουσιν* correctly written. In *Philodemus de Musica*, which we have published, you will see, that this orthography is constantly observed. Thus, Col. xvii, v. 31, *τυγχανειν*; ib. v. 44. *συγγενη*. Col. xxiv, v. 7, *συγγενως*. Col. xxvii, v. 13, *αγχινοιας*. Col. xxxiii, v. 22, *αναγκαιως*. Col. xxxviii, v. 32, *εγκεχειρηκασι*; but in the same place, the transcriber, nodding, (*ut in longo opere*, &c.) wrote at v. 38, *συνκατακοσμησιν*, as I have there observed. This rule of orthography is constantly observed in the other *rolls*, which we have by us; and so closely is it followed, that sometimes, in the case of *two succeeding words*, when the last begins with *γ*, and the first should end with *ν* (as in *μεν γαρ*)

such first word is written with a γ in this manner, ΜΕΓ ΓΑΡ. Now this, unless I am mistaken, is a manifest proof that the *γάρρα* had retained the sound of the *vv*, although it might be pronounced somewhat more softly; as we at this day pronounce the words *angelus*, *anchora*; in doing which the tongue does not rise quite up to the roof of the mouth. If such were not the case, the letter *N* would not be so easily substituted for the *Γ* by the transcribers."

Δ.

The letter δ has the sound, which *Walker* calls in English the *flat* sound of *th*; as in our word *then*, which may be expressed with great exactness, as to sound, by the negative particle $\delta\epsilon\upsilon$ of the Modern Greeks, a corruption of the ancient word $\acute{o}\upsilon\delta\epsilon\upsilon$. This approaches so near to the common sound of the letter *D* in the modern languages, that it does not appear to have given occasion to much controversy. It must, doubtless, be defended, upon the ground of *usage*; which, one would think, should be as decisive in the case of this, as of its kindred letter, *theta*, which has been acquiesced in by the learned of all countries.

Ε.

The sound of this letter, which is that of *e* in the European languages generally, is the same, substantially, with our *e* in the word *there*. This pronunciation of ϵ is universally considered to be the same with that of the *ancient* Greeks.

Z.

The pronunciation of the letter ζ is also, in practice, undisputed: The learned of all nations agree in giving it the sound, which ζ has in English; which is also the pronunciation of the Modern Greeks.

H.

It has been the fate of this letter, as writers have remarked, to be the subject of as much controversy as any in the whole alphabet. *Erasmus* and his followers contended, that the *ancients* pronounced it like what they called long *E* in Latin; by which they meant a sound like *a* in our word *fate*. The *Modern Greeks* pronounce it like our *ee*; which is the sound given to it by the English, and which we have always been accustomed to give it. As far as respects ourselves, therefore, we have no dispute with the *Modern Greeks* about this letter. But the writers on the continent of Europe have generally considered that pronunciation as erroneous; it will, therefore, be necessary, to notice briefly the grounds, upon which the two modes are defended.

That this letter at one period had a sound differing in some respects from that, which it now has in Greece, must be inferred from the description given of it by *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, which is different from his description of the sound of *Iota*; and this latter indisputably had the sound of long *e* (or *ee*) in our language. In the *Herculanean manuscripts* too, the η is sometimes used by the copyist, through mistake, instead of *Epsilon*. But there is also a great mass of evidence tending to show, that about the commencement of the Christian era or not long afterwards, the η and ι were both pronounced alike; and, if we can

ascertain the pronunciation of the language as far back as that period, it will be sufficiently near the classic ages of Greece, to satisfy the most fastidious ear of *foreigners*, as we are in respect to the language. The arguments on both sides of the question respecting the η , are very minutely stated (from various authors but not without remarks of his own) by *Velastus*, a Greek monk of the island of *Chios*, in the *Dissertation* to which I have before referred, and in which upwards of thirty quarto pages are devoted to this letter alone.* I shall here only give a very general view of the reasoning on the subject; and, in doing this, it will be necessary for the present to assume as true, that the diphthong $\epsilon\iota$ had the same sound with the ϵ ; which, by the aid of the *Herculanean Manuscripts*, in addition to the ancient monuments heretofore discovered, may now be proved beyond a doubt to have been the case.

In prosecuting this inquiry, we are enabled to go back at once to the twelfth century by means of the writings of the learned and venerable *Eustathius*; and he, it should be recollected, expressly informs his readers, that his *Commentary on Homer* consists chiefly of *selections from the works of others*, whom even in that age he styles "*the ancients*." Among those writers, (upwards of three hundred and fifty in number, according to the catalogue in *Fabricius*,†) we do, indeed, find the names of philosophers and critics and grammarians from the very earliest periods of Grecian literature. Now *Eustathius*, in the course of his *Commentary*, gives several instances of what he calls $\pi α ρ ῆ χ η σ ι ς$, or words, which

* Thomæ Stanislai Velasti, societatis Jesu, *Dissertatio de Literarum Græcarum Pronunciatione*, Romæ, 1751.

† Fabric. Bib. Græc. tom. 1. p. 306.

are alike *in sound* but different in *signification*; and as examples he gives these lines of Homer, among others, relating to the letter *η*:

Τὸν καὶ ὑπεδδείσαν μάκαρες θεοὶ οὐδέ τ' ἔδυσαν.

Iliad. A. 406.

————— χόλος δὲ μιν ἄγριος ἥπει·

ἥπει δ' οὐκ ἔχαδε στήθος χόλον.

Iliad. Δ. 23, 24.

Ἴπι θεὰ, τίς γὰρ σε θεῶν ἐμοὶ ἄγγελον ἦκε;

ἥπει με προέηκε.

Iliad. Σ. 182, 184.

Upon which last example he particularly remarks, that the Poet has here placed two words near each other, which form the most perfect kind of *parechesis*; which is, when the words are exactly similar *in sound*, but dissimilar in *signification and orthography*—Ἐγγύς ἀλλήλων τίθησι, κατὰ τοιαύτην παρήχησιν, παντελῶς μὲν ἡχοῦσαν ταυτὸν, ἀνομοίωτητα δὲ ἔχουσαν κατὰ τὴν ἔννοιαν, καὶ κατὰ τὴν γραφὴν.*

In another instance (*Iliad. O. 143*, cited by *Velastus*) he uses even more emphatic language; for after citing these lines,

Ἥρη δ' Απόλλωνα καλέσσατο δώματος ἐκτός

Ἴριν δ' ἥ τε θεοῖσι μετάγγελος ἀθανάτοισι,

he remarks, that the poet describes *Iris* paraphrastically, as the messenger of the gods, lest the perfect similarity of sound in Ἥρης and Ἴρις should mislead one, and *Juno* should be supposed to have been called for by *Juno* herself.

* *Eustath. p. 240. edit. Florent. 1730.*

But it is needless to multiply examples of this kind; and I shall merely refer to the two lists of words at the end of *Scapula's* and some other Lexicons; one of which (by *John Philoponus*, as Henry Stephens affirms) will carry us back to the seventh century, and the other, by *Ammonius*, to the fourth century; from which last work, we may proceed still farther back, by means of a writer there cited, by the name of *Didymus*; who thinks it necessary to point out the difference in *signification* between the two words $\lambda\eta\tau\omicron\upsilon\gamma\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\nu$ and $\lambda\iota\tau\omicron\upsilon\gamma\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\nu$; which, if they had been so unlike *in sound*, as the Erasmian pronunciation of η would make them, would not have been classed with the words in this Collection.

The argument founded on *translations* of Roman names into Greek is also applied in the case of the η , as well as of the other letters; and it is observed, that *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, and other Greek writers, rendered the Roman *i* by the η of their own language. But on the other hand, the *Roman* writers frequently rendered the Greek η by their own *e*. Again, it may be replied, that (as *Gellius* observes) the ancient Romans used *e* and *i* indifferently; and Quintilian informs us of the same fact; and, by way of example, he remarks, that the ear cannot plainly distinguish whether the Latin word *Here* has the sound of *I* or of *E*; and that in the works of many authors he found *sibe* and *quase* for *sibi* and *quasi*.*

But the strongest argument from *translations* is derived from the *Oriental Languages*, because of their antiquity and permanency. *Velastus* alludes to this, but contents himself with referring the

Quintil. Instit. lib. 1. capp. 4 and 7.

reader to *Wetstein's* Dissertation. It is, however, urged with much force against the Erasmians, by *Martin* and by *Schmidt*. The former, in his reply to *Metkerke*, (who had incautiously adduced it as being favourable to his own cause,) thus presses his adversary: "What shall I say on this point, *Metkerke*; or rather what shall I not say? In truth, when you appeal to the *Hebrews*, you betray your utter ignorance—*Hebræos prorsus non intelligis*—nor, as it appears, have you ever read a passage in their language. For what in the Greek is rendered by *η*, is in the Hebrew *i* long [that is *ee*] and therefore in *Greek* it must be pronounced in the same manner." *Martin* then examines the Hebrew words referred to by *Metkerke*. *Schmidt* remarks, that in a multitude of Greek words which are retained in the *Syriac* Version of the New Testament, the Greek *η* is *always* rendered by *Hirik* and never by *..* or by *..* — thus,

כאפא from *κηφα*, Matt. xvi. 18.

פרקליטא from *παράκλητος*, John xiv. 16.

ריתיקא from *διαθήκη*, Matt. xxvi. 28, Luke i. 72.

קורנליוס from *κορνήλιος*, Acts x. 1.

פנטיקוסטי from *πεντηκοστή*, Acts ii. 1.

זאטמא from *ζήτημα*, Acts xviii. 15.

with some other examples, which it is needless to particularize in this place.

It is only necessary to notice one other argument in this case; which is the syllable *Bñ* used by *Cratinus* (as before observed) to express the cry of a sheep. In addition to the remarks made under the letter *Beta*, I need only observe, (as *Velastus* does, after *Fabricius*,) that there were two writers of the name of *Cra-*

tinus, both of whom lived long before the time of Plato, Thucydides and Pericles; a period, to which no one will attempt to trace the pronunciation of the Greek language, and at which time the letter η might possibly have had the full sound of our long *a* throughout all Greece. But it is worthy of remark, that the word $B\tilde{\eta}$ is spoken of by *Suidas* and the author of the *Etymologicon Magnum* as an *Attic* word— $B\tilde{\eta}$, το μιμητικὸν τῆς τῶν προ-
 ξάτων φωνῆς, οὐχὶ BAI , λέγεται Ἀττικῶς;* an expression, from which we must infer, that the word in question was peculiar to the people of Attica; and that the people of other parts of Greece would have used another word, to express the same sound.

Θ.

The *Modern Greeks* pronounce the letter Θ just as we do *th* in our words *thank, think, &c.* and this has always been admitted by the learned, from the days of Erasmus to our own times, to be the ancient pronunciation. Yet it is difficult to perceive, why the modern sound of this letter should not have been contested, as well as that of several others in the alphabet.

I.

The sound of the letter ϵ is also universally agreed to have been the same anciently, as at the present day; that is, like long *e* (or *ee*) in English; and so it is always pronounced on the continent of Europe.

* *Etymol. Magn.* p. 196. edit. Sylburg.

K.

The pronunciation of the letter κ is also admitted to have been that of k in the languages of the present day; as the Modern Greeks always pronounce it.

Λ.

The letter λ is supposed to have had anciently the common sound of L in the European languages. The Modern Greeks also give it the same sound before the vowels α , ϵ , o , ω ; but before i and u , it seems, they give it the liquid sound of gl in Italian; as I have remarked in the Table of the Alphabet, at p. 237. Whether this distinction was observed anciently does not appear.

M.

The pronunciation of the letter μ is supposed to have remained unchanged to the present day. It has the common sound of M in all the modern languages.

N.

The ν in Modern Greek, before α , ϵ , o , ω , has the common sound of n in the European languages; but before η , i , u , (as I am informed by the Greeks I have mentioned,) it has the sound of gn in the word *bagnio*; as I have before observed, in the *Table of the Alphabet*. European scholars use only the first of these sounds.

Another modification of the sound of this letter, among the Modern Greeks, takes place when it is followed by the consonants β , μ , π ; in which case it slides into the sound of m .

This modification of ν , though so natural a consequence of the combination of these letters, was utterly proscribed by the learned of Europe. *Mekerchus* asserts—"Now, that ν ought always to be pronounced like n , and that before β, μ, π , its sound should not be changed into m , is sufficiently proved by this; that it has neither the authority of the ancients, nor euphony, to recommend it, and that all the letters should sound as they are written; and the learned pronunciation is elegant and not difficult." He then adds, that he supposes "certain sciolists, who had more knowledge of *Latin* than of *Greek*, must have made this change, in consequence of their observing that the *Latin* prepositions *an*, *in*, and *con*, before b, m, p , in compound words, were changed into *am*, *im*, and *com*."*

Henry Stephens also (following *Mekerchus*) peremptorily decides, that this modification of the ν is the work of *sciolists*—"il-lud decretum (says he) quorundam sciorum." He then argues, that this pronunciation occasions ambiguities and deformity in the language; and that "these sounds are like great monsters, which every man ought to attack with the club of Hercules;" and therefore we ought to reject this pronunciation. But the only reason he gives for his opinion is a remark of *Quintilian*, who says, that in *Greek* no word ends in m . The remark of *Quintilian*, however, does by no means warrant the inference thus drawn from it. Now, that the ν anciently took the sound of μ , when it was followed by any one of the letters β, μ , or π , it may be hazardous to affirm; but it is certainly a little remarkable, that, contrary to the opinion of those learned men, we find, in the *Herculanean Manuscripts*, evidence of its having that sound when it was fol-

* *Mekerchi Comment.* p. 162.

lowed by the β . The learned editor of the manuscript of *Philodemus* states, that ν is frequently substituted for μ in that work; and he gives the following, as one instance of such false orthography; which must have been occasioned by the similarity of sound in that combination: "*Sæpe enim librarius noster ν pro μ scribit; ut hac ipsa columna videre est, v. 14, ubi ἀπολανεανουσιν pro ἀπολαμβανουσιν, legitur; etsi col. 1. recte scripserat ἀντιλαμβάνονται et παραλαμβάνουσαι: quod ejus sive imperitiæ sive oscitantiae tribuendum.*"* Here, then, we have another instance, where the usage of the *Modern Greeks*, contrary to the theories of ingenious and learned Europeans, is confirmed.

Ξ.

The ξ always has the sound of *ks*, as well at the *beginning*, as in the other parts of a word; never, that of *gs* or *gz*, and much less, that of simple *z*, which we are accustomed to give it at the beginning of words. The sound of *ks* perfectly agrees with the description given of this letter by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who says, it is compounded of *z* and ς , but does not intimate that it has any thing of the sound of γ in it.

Ο.

The general pronunciation of $\omicron$ is as nearly like that of *o* in the word *nor*, as any sound which we have in English; but it may be more exactly described, as a sound between that and the sound of *o* in the word *no*. The learned make no question as to the antiquity of this pronunciation.

* *Philodem. col. ii. l. 27.*

II.

The letter π , it is universally agreed, had anciently the sound which it now generally has in Greece; that is, of the letter p in the modern languages. When, however, it is preceded by a *flat* consonant, (as *Walker* denominates that class of letters,) it is very naturally modified by it. Thus, if preceded by μ , it takes the sound of β ; as, $\alpha\mu\pi\epsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ is pronounced *ámbelos*. Such modifications of the general sounds of letters are common in every language. In the present instance, we see, in the *Greek* language the letter π being preceded by a *flat* consonant, takes the sound of β ; in *Latin*, on the other hand, we have a well known instance from *Quintilian*, where the letter b , when followed by a *sharp* consonant, t , slides into the sound of p : “—— ut cum dico *obtinuit* (says he) *secundam enim b literam ratio poscit, aures magis audiunt p.*”* Whether the ancient Greeks thus varied the sound of the π , it is impossible to determine with certainty. But it will, most assuredly, be safer to follow the present usage of the *natives* of Greece, than to rely upon the theoretical opinions of *Mekerchus* and other *foreigners*, who assert without proof, that such a modification of the β is “ridiculous.”†

P.

The pronunciation of the ρ is undisputed. It is agreed, that it has always had the sound which r has in modern languages.

* Quintil. Instit. lib. i. c. 7.

† Mekerch, p. 162.

Σ.

The sound of the letter σ is universally agreed to be, that of *s* in the languages of our own times. We sometimes give it the sound of *z* in certain combinations; and it is, in fact, occasionally modified by other letters; thus, the expression $\sigma\iota\delta\varsigma \mu\omicron\upsilon$ would sound, to our ears, like $\sigma\iota\delta\zeta\mu\omicron\upsilon$, in consequence of the *flat* consonant after the σ . But, generally speaking, we should take care to give this letter the pure sibilant sound of *s*.

Τ.

The general pronunciation of the letter τ is agreed to have been anciently the same that it now is in Greece; that of the modern *T*. But the Greeks of the present day, when this letter is preceded by ν , give it the sound of *d*; thus, $\pi\alpha\nu\tau\epsilon\lambda\tilde{\omega}\varsigma$ is pronounced *pándelos*. This pronunciation was violently opposed in the Erasmian controversy; but principally on the ground, that it was inconsistent, that the same letter should have more than one pronunciation; and yet all the writers in that controversy (who were Frenchmen, Dutchmen and Englishmen) must have observed the like *inconsistencies* in their own languages. In this and other cases, where we have no evidence in the works of ancient writers, the *general usage* of Modern Greece ought to have great weight.*

* It should have been remarked under the letter κ , that the same modification takes place in that letter, when preceded by a *flat* consonant (γ) as we find in the other two mutes, π and τ ; thus, $\epsilon\gamma\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\phi\alpha\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ is pronounced as if written $\epsilon\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\phi\alpha\lambda\omicron\varsigma$.

Υ.

The Modern Greeks pronounce υ like their ι, or like our *ee*. Strange as this may at first seem to us, there can be little doubt, as will presently appear, that this is extremely near its original sound; and probably, is exactly the sound it had as long ago as the *first century*. *Henry Stephens* and other French writers (and indeed most writers of other nations) have no doubt, that it was originally pronounced like the French *u*; and the description given by *Dionysius of Halicarnassus* of its pronunciation in his time, corresponds in a very striking manner, with that sound in the French language. After observing, that in pronouncing ω, the mouth is rounded and the lips drawn towards each other, he adds—"Εστὶ δὲ ἥττον τούτου τὸ υ· περὶ γὰρ αὐτὰ τὰ χεῖλη συστολῆς γενομένης ἀξιολόγου, πνίγεται, καὶ σενὸς ἐκπίπτει ὁ ἦχος—The υ is inferior to this; for a remarkable contraction of the lips is made, and a slender stifled sound is uttered."* Now the *u* in French borders so nearly upon our *ee*, that in learning the language, students, during their first awkward efforts to attain this difficult sound, generally pronounce it like *ee*. That the υ, however, shortly after the time of *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, had the simple sound of *Iota*, is now rendered in the highest degree probable, by what we find in the *Herculanean Manuscripts*; where it is sometimes erroneously used by the copyist for the letter ι. The learned editor of *Philodemus* makes the following remark upon it: "Sic. v. 17, [col. vii.] pro διδαγμα habes δΥ-δαγμα, et v. 19, pro ἀκολασιαν, ἀχολασιαν, quæ omnia bonus

* Dions. Hal. De Structura Orat. sect. 14. p. 96. edit. Upton.

Conrector fidenti oculo est prætergressus. Nonne autem hinc horum elementorum valde adfinem sonum apud veteres arguere licet?"* Thus it appears, that the modern pronunciation of this letter may be traced back, with great probability, to the commencement of the Christian era; a period, which may properly enough be considered as classic. It should also be noticed, that in the present instance, the *v* is thus substituted for *i* in an *accented* syllable; which, if the *ancient Greeks* regulated their pronunciation by the *accents* as their descendants do, adds greatly to the force of the argument in this case; for an *accented* syllable would not be likely to be written with letters, which had not a very close affinity to each other in sound; whereas *un-accented* syllables, on the contrary, might be spelled with letters, which would not, of necessity, very closely resemble each other. This circumstance, by the way, will, as I am strongly inclined to think, explain many of the seeming contradictions in the arguments, which are founded upon the instances of false orthography in ancient manuscripts.

Φ.

The letter φ, it is agreed, had anciently the same sound which is given to it by the Modern Greeks; that is, the sound of *F*. But, from the remark made by *Cicero* upon a Greek that could not pronounce *Fundanius*, but said *Fhundanius*, it was doubtless uttered more forcibly, or with a stronger compression of the lips, than the Latin letter.†

* Philodem. p. 36.

† See Quintil. lib. i. c.

X.

The learned all agree, that the letter χ was pronounced by the ancient Greeks with a strong aspiration; like the *ch* in German, or, much as the letters *gh* final are pronounced by the Irish and Scotch. The *Modern Greeks* give it the same sound. That it had some resemblance to the κ , appears from its being sometimes substituted for it in writing; as in the instance above cited from the *Herculanean Manuscripts*, under the letter Υ , where $\alpha\chi\omicron\lambda\alpha\sigma\iota\alpha\nu$ is written for $\alpha\kappa\omicron\lambda\alpha\sigma\iota\alpha\nu$.

 Ψ .

The pronunciation of the letter ψ is undisputed. It is admitted by all, that it had the sound of *ps*; though occasionally modified by the other letters, so as to sound sometimes like *bs*.

 Ω .

The Modern Greeks pronounce the ω just as they do the o ; and it seems to be undeniable, that anciently they differed only in *quantity* but not in *sound*. Before the discovery of the *Herculanean papyri*, it had been observed that they were frequently interchanged by transcribers; and we now find the same thing in those manuscripts. The editor of *Philodemus* has this remark upon it, col. xvii, v. 14; where he says we should read (to use his language) “pro $\alpha\mu\epsilon\iota\nu\omicron\nu$ fortasse $\alpha\mu\epsilon\iota\nu\omega\nu$, v. 16, pro $\tau\omega\nu$ $\mu\epsilon\tau\rho\omega\nu$ *refingendum* $\tau\omicron\nu$ $\mu\epsilon\tau\rho\omicron\nu$.”*

A few remarks upon the sounds of the *diphthongs* will conclude what I have to offer at present upon this subject; but before ex-

* *Philodem.* in not: p. 78.

amining each one by itself, it may be proper to notice an objection, which is applicable to the modern pronunciation of them all. *Erasmus* contended, that in all of them, the sound of both the component letters should be heard. Otherwise (says he) "why are they called proper diphthongs, unless the syllable gives the sound of the two vowels?"* *Beza*, and after him, *Metkerke*, and various other writers, hold the same language; and think, that, as the very name of *diphthong* means a combination of two sounds, therefore they must have been pronounced in that manner, and not according to the practice of the Modern Greeks, with one simple sound only; for if this were the case, they argue, these combinations of letters would not have been called *diphthongs*, but *digraphs*. At this day it seems truly surprizing, that the writers in the controversy (who were Dutchmen, Frenchmen and Englishmen) should have overlooked the circumstance, that the same abuse of the term *diphthong* was to be found in their own, as well as in other languages. To apply their rule, therefore, those foreigners might argue, in respect to the English language, that there are certain combinations of vowels in it, which Englishmen call *diphthongs*; and as they are called *diphthongs*, and not *digraphs*, they must be uttered in such a manner, that the two sounds shall be heard! The mere application of the reasoning to our own language, shows its fallacy.

AI.

This diphthong is pronounced by the Modern Greeks like ϵ , or our *a* in *fate*. This pronunciation may be traced back, by means of the *Greek* writers, with perfect certainty to the twelfth

* *Erasm. Dialog.* p. 89.

century. *Eustathius* (as quoted by the writers in the controversy) after citing the following line from *Homer*,

Ἀλλὰ πίθεσθε δὲ ὕμμες, ἐπεὶ πείθεσθαι ἄμεινον,

remarks, that “*πίθεσθε* and *πείθεσθαι* though they differ in their letters are exactly alike in sound;” and the same is the case, as he says, in this passage—Ὀφθήσῃ ΚΕΝΟΣ ἐναντίον μου, ἀλλ’ ἄλλον τρόπον ΚΑΙΝΟΣ; “for here *κενός* and *καινός* have the same sound.” Several other passages might be adduced from *Greek* writers to the same effect, though not so decisive as these. I do not find any, however, which carry us back to the first century; nor, on the contrary, do we find any remarks of these writers, which give the least intimation, that any change had taken place in the pronunciation of their language.

In the case of this diphthong, however, as in that of the letter *η*, we have evidence of this pronunciation of sufficiently high antiquity, in the *Oriental* languages. *Schmidt* observes, that in the *Syriac* Version of the New Testament, not only the Greek *ε*, but the diphthong *αι*, in those Greek words which are retained in the version, are expressed both by *tsere* and *segol*; as, κεφάλαιον, קֶפֶלֶן; καισαρεία, קַסְרֵיָא; εἰς πραιτώριον, לְפֶרֶטוֹרִיִן, &c.*

AY.

The Modern Greeks pronounce this diphthong sometimes *af* and sometimes *av*, as observed in the Table of the alphabet. The argument of greatest antiquity is founded on a remark of *Cicero*, in his treatise *De Divinatione*; where he says, that when *Marcus Crassus* was embarking his army at *Brundusium*, some person

* *Schmidt*, De pronun. Græc. p. 638.

who was there selling figs brought from *Caunus*, cried, *Cauneas* [i. e. either *Καυνείας*, the Greek name or *Cave ne eas*] which was considered as an omen against his proceeding. "Hence (says *Erasmus Schmidt*) it is apparent that the Greek diphthong *av* very nearly corresponded to the Latin *av* as pronounced in the word *Cave*." In addition to this, *Schmidt* again resorts to the *Syriac* Version; where, as he says, the *υ* in *av* and *ευ* is rendered by *ܝ*, so as to sound like *V*: *ܦܘܠܝܘܣ* from *Παῦλος*; *ܩܠܘܕܝܘܣ* from *Κλαύδιος*, etc.

The most important argument against this pronunciation of *av*, is founded upon the well known passage of *Aristophanes*, where the barking of a dog is expressed by *ᾶῦ*, *ᾶῦ*; from which it is inferred, that this syllable must have been pronounced like *ow* in our word *how*; it being taken for granted, that *Aristophanes* used a word, which expressed the barking of a dog with exactness. But he might have used a word which was merely an *approximation* to the sound; and this will appear to have been the case. In addition to the observations under the letter *Beta* (p. 250) upon the uncertainty of arguments derived from *animal sounds*, I will only make one or two remarks applicable to this particular word. It is evident, from what has been already observed, that the letter *υ* must have been pronounced either like the French *u*, or like *ee*: This syllable then, if not pronounced *av*, must have sounded like our word *aye*; which no one will think quite so near the barking of a dog, as the present pronunciation, *av*, *av*. *Aristophanes*, then, must have adopted this word as an *approximation* to the sound in question.

EI.

The arguments in support of the Modern Greek pronunciation of this diphthong appear to be unanswerable. Indeed some of the writers on the *Erasmian* side concede the point. Without repeating the remarks of *Eustathius* and other writers, who may be thought not sufficiently *ancient*, I will only add to the observations made under some of the preceding letters, the following, from the *second* volume of the *Herculanean MSS.* which, at the same time, contains an important remark respecting the *accentuation* of words. After noticing the word *εμποδείας*, written with *ει* instead of *ι*, the editor says—"Quod autem pro simplici *iota* descriptum habeas *ει*, id somnolento calligrapho tribuas, qui sæpe non secus ac alii horum voluminum exscriptores, ut jamdudum observavimus, hujusmodi litterarum *εναλλαγην* facit. Et ne longius abscedas, mox hac ipsa columna v. 14, *ἀορις-τείας* pro *ἀοριςτίας* descriptum invenies. Id autem argumento nobis esse debet, non modo diphthongum *ει* affinem sono fuisse *τω ι*, sed etiam hujusmodi voces penultima longa solitas fuisse *ferri*."*

In the ancient *Greek Inscriptions* published by Dr. Clarke in his *Account of the Greek Marbles*, we also find evidence of the same kind respecting the *ει*: Thus, p. 5. TEIMOΘEOΣ ΔΑΣΕΙΟΣ ΧΑΙΡΕ TEIMOΘEOΣ, etc. Again, at p. 44. Η ΒΟΥΛΗ ΚΑΙ Ο ΔΗΜΟΣ ΕΤΕΙΜΗΣΑΝ ΤΙΤΟΝ, etc.

* *Epicur.* lib. xi. col. vi. p. 50.

ΕΥ.

There does not appear to be any direct evidence in the *Greek* writers of very ancient date, proving the sound of this diphthong to have been *ev* or *ef*, as the Modern Greeks pronounce it. If, however, there is reason to believe that *αυ* was pronounced *av* or *af*, the argument from analogy will apply with much force. But though we find nothing decisive in the *Greek* writers, yet we have evidence in this case also from the *Oriental* languages; for, according to *Erasmus Schmidt*, in the *Syriac Version*, *ευ* is rendered by ܐܘ, of which he gives the following instances:

ܐܘܬܝܚܘܬ from 'Εὐτυχος, Acts xx. 9.

ܐܘܕܝܐ from 'Εὐδοία, Philip. iv. 2.

ΟΙ.

The diphthong *οι* is pronounced by the Modern Greeks exactly like *oe* in some English words derived from the Greek, or like *ee*. The antiquity of this pronunciation has been much contested. Most of the writers in the *Erasmian* controversy seem to have been of opinion, that the Greeks pronounced it just as *oi* is pronounced in the *French* language. The principal reason for this opinion was, the general one mentioned above; that a *diphthong* must have two sounds; an hypothesis, which is falsified by what every one of those writers must have found in his own language. That this diphthong has for many centuries had the sound of our *ee*, is proved by the same kind of evidence as above adduced in the case of some of the other diphthongs; that is, the mistakes of the transcribers of manuscripts; for they constantly substitute the

οι for η and ι. *Velastus* cites a striking remark on this subject of as old a date as the beginning of the fourth century. “Who (says he) has not heard of the complaints of *St. Jerom*, *Augustine*, and *Eucherius*, in respect to the word *Cenomia*; which, as it was written by the *Greeks*, sometimes κηνομυῖα, sometimes κυνομυῖα, and at other times κοινομία, in consequence of the identity of sound in all these words, occasioned infinite trouble to the interpreters of holy writ.”* But the most ancient, and I think the most decisive, testimony in support of the modern pronunciation of this diphthong is, the passage, cited in the controversy, from *Thucydides*. This author, in his unrivalled description of the *Plague of Athens*, informs us, that during that calamity, the following verse, (which aged people said had been sung of old,) was, among other things, brought up to recollection :

Ἦξει Δωριακὸς πόλεμος καὶ ΛΟΙΜΟΣ ἅμ’ αὐτῷ.

Upon which he remarks—“that a dispute arose among people, whether the oracle meant λοιμὸς, a pestilence, or λιμὸς, a famine. Their present sufferings (he adds) made them suppose the former was the word; for they adapted the oracle to the calamity of the times. But I am of opinion, that in case of another Doric war, if a famine should take place, they will be equally ready to apply the verse to that event.” Now, if the two words in question were not pronounced alike, there could have been no room for this ambiguity; and to all the objections of those, who reason upon this verse, as if it had been in *writing*, it is a sufficient answer, that the oracles were delivered *orally*.†

* Velusti Dissertat. p. 80.

† This pronunciation of οι, it need hardly be observed, will destroy all the supposed force and beauty of our lofty πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης; which we apply

ΟΥ.

It is generally admitted by the learned, that the *ancient* Greeks pronounced the diphthong ου as their descendants do; that is, like *ou* in our word *you*, or like *oo*.

ΗΥ.

This is sounded by the Modern Greeks like *eev*. I have not found any particular remarks upon this diphthong; but the general reasoning in respect to the αυ and ευ will, in a degree, be applicable to it.

ΥΙ.

The sound of this diphthong is scarcely to be distinguished, except in length, from either of its two component letters taken alone. This pronunciation must undoubtedly be defended upon the ground of *usage*; I am not aware of any direct evidence relative to it in the Greek writers.

to the roaring of the *ocean*. But the following remark (from an intelligent writer before cited) will, at least, make us doubt of the justness of that application: "I must here add, that these men [some modern Greeks] confirmed an observation of our late revered and lamented President, that we are much mistaken in our idea of the supposed lofty sound of πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης; that the Borderers on the coast of the Archipelago take their ideas from the gentle laving of the shore by a summer wave, and not from the roaring of a winter ocean; and they accordingly pronounced it *Polyphlisveo thalasses*."* The Greeks, I have conversed with, pronounce it in the same manner, and accenting the antepenultimate of the first word, and the penultimate of the second.

* Observations on the Greek Accents, by Arthur Browne, Esq. in the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. vii. p. 370.

ΩΥ.

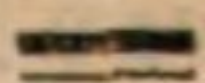
This diphthong rarely occurs; it is pronounced *oav* or *oaf* according to the consonant that follows it.

The improper diphthongs *α, η, ω* require no particular remark; as the Modern Greeks, like ourselves, pronounce them just as the simple letters are pronounced without the subscribed *Iota*.

In addition to these particular observations on the letters, I cannot but call the attention of the members of the Academy to a few facts, which well deserve the consideration of scholars. Of these, a very important one is the *universality* of the pronunciation of the Modern Greeks; which is found to be substantially the same in the islands and other parts of Greece, quite remote from each other and having little or no connexion by means of commerce or otherwise. Another remarkable circumstance is, the use of *ancient Greek* in their Church-service; which has been continued from the first propagation of Christianity to the present day. Now the just pronunciation of the language of their Church-service has ever been scrupulously attended to; and the present mode has been handed down with extreme care from the earliest periods. The *nation* itself, also, remains to this time a distinct race of people; and it should be recollected, that the oppression of their Turkish conquerors has only served to keep them the more embodied, and the less liable to the effects of a necessary intercourse with each other.

How cautious then ought we, as foreigners, to be in condemning the invariable usage of a people thus circumstanced, in such a question as the pronunciation of their language. We perceive that the most eminent scholars have entertained opinions respect-

ing it, which later discoveries have proved to be unfounded. At one period, for example, it was contended by the learned of Europe, that the γ before γ , κ , &c. was not to be pronounced like ν ; that ϵ was not to be sounded like simple ϵ , &c. as the Modern Greeks pronounce them. These opinions now appear to have been erroneous, and the usage of the *Modern*, is found to be conformable to that of the *ancient* Greeks. The learned also once thought, that the ancient Greeks used only *capital* letters, and that the *small letters*, now used, were the invention of the lower ages; but an inscription found in Herculaneum in these very characters has obliged them to abandon that opinion. They believed too, and with much ingenuity had almost proved, that the Greek *Accents* were of comparatively modern origin; but here again, unfortunately, the same Herculanean Inscription confuted their theories. In almost every instance, in short, where the opinions of the learned have been at variance with the usage of the *Modern Greeks*, whenever any evidence has been discovered relating to the point in controversy, the theories of the former have proved to be unfounded, and the usage of the latter confirmed.



I have thought it might be interesting, to some persons, to subjoin to this communication the following letter in *Modern Greek*, written by Mr. *Ciclitira*, of which a *fac-simile* is annexed. Those persons, who have not paid much attention to the language of Modern Greece, will, I am sure, be surprized at the resemblance of the words, and not less surprized to see the *accents*, *breathings*, &c. used so much in conformity with the rules in our grammars of *ancient* Greek. And on the subject of the *accents* (which I

shall consider in a future paper) I cannot avoid submitting one fact to the consideration of scholars—that the Modern Greeks always pronounce according to the accents ; and, in *speaking*, they place the accent (or stress of the voice) exactly where the rules of prosody require us to place the *written* accent. For example : The word *ἄνθρωπος*, in the nominative case, they pronounce *ánthropos*, following the *accent*, and disregarding the *quantity* of the long vowel in the penultimate ; but in the *genitive*, where the rule of prosody requires us to accent the penultimate because the final syllable is long, they place the accent (or stress of the voice) on the penultimate, also ; and *ἄνθρώπου* is then pronounced *anthró-poo*. This is noticed in the *Dissertation of Arthur Browne Esq.* before cited ; and I have myself constantly found it to be the case both with Mr. Ciclitira and the Greek Captain.

*Translation of the annexed Greek letter.**

SIR,

I perceive that your colleges here do not differ in the least from those of England as to their studies either in philosophy or literature. But, what shall I say ? Though they are adorned with the higher sciences and the languages, and possess so much learning, yet I have heard the *Greek Language* read with an irregular pronunciation of the syllables, with false accentuation, without proper cadences, and, in short, without the least Greek utterance. With some reason then I may observe, that instruction in this is yet wanting ; and I have therefore presented myself before this illustrious nation, and have engaged to teach, to any who may desire it, the *Greek pronunciation* ; being myself a

* See Pl. IV.

native of the Peloponnesus, and from the city anciently called *Py-lus*, but now *Navarinos*, in which same country I learnt the language and pronunciation.

Further I will observe, that besides the pronunciation, if any shall desire to learn to *write*, I will instruct them in my mode of writing, which is conformable to the *writing letters* which are now used in our colleges. These ; and I with all respect I remain,

your humble servant,

NICHOLAS TZIKLITEERA.

Boston, the 2d Feb'y, 1818.

NOTE.

Page 256, line 3 from the bottom. The passage from *Cratinus* is commonly cited as I have here given it ; and so it stands in the *Etymologicon Magnum*, p. 196, edit. Sylburg. and in *Phavorinus*, p. 1186. But in *Suidas* (as quoted by *Constantine*) the first part of the line is—'Ο δη λαισθιος, etc. This difference may probably be accounted for, by the ι and οι being both pronounced alike. Which of the two is the true reading it may not be easy to determine ; nor is it of any consequence in the present case. It may, however, be observed, that the latter reading is supported by the *Lexicon* of *John Zonaras*, p. 387, which has—'Ο δε λαισθιος, etc. This valuable work, as well as the long desired *Lexicon* of *Photius*, after slumbering for centuries among the manuscripts of the libraries of Europe, has lately been given to the public by the indefatigable zeal and perseverance of the scholars of Germany. I call it *Zonaras' Lexicon*, after the editor, *Joh. Aug. Henr. Tittman*, who gives several reasons of some weight for ascribing it to that author. Nor does the circumstance mentioned in his

Prolegomena, p. 33, affect the probability of his supposition; though the learned editor seems to be at a loss how to account for it. He observes of one of his Manuscripts—"In folio singulari, quod post thecam ad compacturam Cod. pertinet, legitur: *Arsenii cujusdam Lexicon Græcum*. Hinc etiam in Catalogo *Nesselii* impresso et deinde in bibliotheca Fabricii sub titulo illo commemoratur. [Vol. vi. p. 631, ed. nov. Nessel. part iv. p. 74.] Sed quæ causa fuerit, cur *Arsenio*, nescio cui, hoc opus tributum sit, *frustra rescire cupio*, neque de *Arsenio* quodam, Grammatico aut Lexici auctore, mihi quidquam constat." The source of this blunder in the MS. (for a blunder it certainly must be) is, I think, discoverable upon examining the Lexicon. The words are all arranged in five classes—masculine, feminine and neuter nouns, verbs and adverbs, which last class comprehends the other parts of speech. Now it happens, that the first class of words under the letter *A*, consists of *masculine* nouns, and it is accordingly entitled *Αρσενικον*; which word, being seen at the head of the MS. would be mistaken, by some owner of it, for the name of the author. If the work had begun with the class of *feminine* nouns (*Θηλυκον*) we might perhaps have had *Thelycus*' Lexicon.

ERRATA.

Page	13	line 28	for λῖμος read λιμὸς.
"	"	"	λοιμός read λοιμὸς.
18	12	έ, αι, οι, αιτ, οйт,	read ε, αἵ, οἰς, αἰτς, ετς.
31	17	balucum	read balneum.
51	11	137	read 13.
61	19	250	read 26.

Pickering, John

An Essay on the pronunciation of the Greek language As published in the
memoirs of the American Academy of arts sciences

Cambridge 1818

4 L.gr. 89 h

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10523468-3